

17115

Bonaparte

Reminiscences.

Years 1840-96.



HARRY ABBOTT.



Calcutta:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE "STAR" PRESS,
19, LALL BAZAR STREET.

1896.

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DEDICATION.



TO my dearest and best friend, Mr. J. J. McLeod, I dedicate these reminiscences, for no one has done more to support Sonopore, than the brave Highland gentleman and keen sportsman, who, since 1862, has scarcely missed a meeting, and who has run and ridden hundreds of horses on its course, during his long and honored racing career. One, too, whom the officials have ever held in respect and estimation, not only as a model landlord, planter, and volunteer, but one who has been most useful to them as an adviser, and who was once told, and told truthfully, by a Civilian, that he was a bright example to both white and black. "Ave Jimmy Chumparun Imperator."

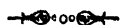
H. E. ABBOTT.

PREFACE.

MY object in publishing these reminiscences is to hand down to future visitors as correct a history as is possible of meetings of bye-gone years, when under the mangoe groves the best sportsmen, and the best horses in India used to collect, meetings at which the parents of many of the youngsters who now frequent Sonapore, plighted their troths. It has not been a light task, for scant indeed are the records of ancient days, and it has taken me six months to compile what follows. My thanks are due to Mr. Minden Wilson for recalling to my recollection many an amusing anecdote, and for the account of Lord Mayo's reception of the great Jung Bahadoor, which I have copied from his little book "Reminiscences of Behar." Mr. Frank Vincent has also kindly put me right as to one or two errors which crept into the original M. S. S. published in the *Indian Planters' Gazette*. But long as the work has taken, it has been a labour of love; for exiled as I have been in India for over thirty-four years and with only a five weeks' holiday to England *ad interim*, Sonapore has been to me what Christmas is to home folk. I can never forget and never repay the kindness and courtesy which have been accorded me by my brother Stewards, especially Mr. R. S. Lockart, ever since I have acted as their Honorary Secretary. My happiest hours have been spent at the dear old meeting under the trees, and if I have gushed a bit too much over the men and horses of my time, I can only plead for forgiveness. With infinite sadness of heart has it been my heavy task as Editor of the *Indian Planters' Gazette* to chronicle the deaths of many of my dear old pals, but the memories of poor Monty Turnbull, Albert Mangles, Gwatkin Williams, George Thomas, Willie Elliot and Sammy Ayres, will remain green with old Sonaporeans till the last of us crosses the bourne.

H. E. ABBOTT.

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REMINISCENCES OF SONEPORE.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY YEARS.

THE *raison d'être* of the yearly European gathering at Sonapore is of course the fair, which the local officials have to attend to keep order, and see to the sanitary arrangements. In the olden days planters visited it to buy horses, and gradually it has become one of the most popular and enjoyable social gatherings in the country. Its racing has had its ups and downs; at one time it held pride of place and in the sixties and seventies was known as the Goodwood of India. Latterly the breaking up of the local stables of Lall Seryah, Jaintpore, and Burhowley, added to the superior attractions of meetings like Lucknow, and Calcutta, have combined to make it less patronised than of yore. But there is no other meeting throughout the length and breadth of the land, where visitors can enjoy themselves so thoroughly. There is not an idle moment from beginning to end, every camp is free of the others, strangers find such a warm welcome that they feel at home from the very first, and three days racing, and three balls, with cricket, tennis, polo, gymkhanas, and other fun thrown in, satisfy even the most exigent epicurean.

It would be interesting, were it possible, to collect facts showing when the fair began to be held and its origin. There can be no doubt that the particular spot was chosen on account of its sanctity—being situated at the confluence of the Gunduck and the Ganges, such junctions being considered especially holy by the Hindus. The “Salig Ram” or Gunduck is mentioned in the Ramayana, and is the river where the *Saligrama* is said to be found to this day. The story of the origin of the fair is thus told: Once upon a time in days of

yore, just where the Gunduck pours its waters into the Ganges, there was a terrible fight between an elephant and an alligator, the two monsters of the land and water. In those days Sonapore was a wilderness, and elephants roamed about there freely. When the battle was raging at its fiercest, both the combatants invoked the help of their respective gods. The two gods came to the spot at once and brought about an amicable settlement between the two foes. In token of their friendship and the kind intercession of the deities, both the combatants asked to be allowed to build a temple on the spot to be called after the two gods. The permission was granted and the temple of *Hori Hora* was built which is simply a combination of the names of Vishnu and Siva and represents the union of the two deities in one—a combination which is variously accounted for. *Chattar* means a collection or gathering, an assembly; thus we have the origin of the *Hori Hor Chattar Mela*. The fair was never held on such a large scale as it is now. It began to resume this proportion about 50 years ago. The fair extends about three miles North and South and two miles East and West. The temple of *Hori Hora* is the principal place of worship, but smaller temples have sprung up—chief among which are the *Kali Asthan* and *Panch Diota Mandil*, which claim pilgrims' donations and offerings. There are others of minor importance but a pious pilgrim, to derive the full benefit from his pilgrimage, must visit and do devotion in all the temples.

The *Panch Diota Mandil* which is a collection of various deities is presided over, strange to say, by a Priestess. She says she has built the temple with the offerings she has collected herself single-handed, and has now taken up her quarters permanently there. It is an unusual sight to see a Hindu priestess in these days—especially one who is such a fine woman as the "*Maiji*" as she is called. She is a grand old lady, and appears from her talk to be a native of Guzerat. But she can

never be induced, people say, to enter into her previous history, so there is a good deal of mystery attaching to her. No one knows whence she came, or how she collected the large sum of money which has enabled her to build the temple. People say when she arrived here twenty-five years ago she had an immense quantity of valuable jewellery about her. She is still handsome, is much fairer than natives of these parts and speaks intelligently and is not above accepting an offering from any one. She has a brother disciple in the same temple, who is also a native of Guzerat, and people say both are very respectably connected (some say the old lady is a *Rani*) and have left their home to become *fakirs* or *sadhus* being weary of the vanities of this world. The old lady has her hair tied in a coil on the top of her head, which, with the ornaments she puts on, gives her quite a dignified and queenly appearance. The temple of *Hori Hora Nath* has at present an English speaking mohant, by name Gobind Gir. He is a native of Patna, and was adopted by the old Mohant and educated in the Zillah school of Chapra. He is the junior disciple. The senior disciple Jai Keshun Gir who ought to have succeeded, turned out to be a spendthrift, and so the junior disciple was elected. The present Mohant is very intelligent and affable and claims acquaintance with all the big rajas of India.

Previous to some fifty years ago, the Sonapore Race Meeting was held on the Tirhoot side of the Gunduck at Hajepore, but the course got so cut away, that it was necessary to choose a fresh site, and the present track at Sonapore was laid out. Up to some ten years back, the ruins of the old grandstand were still in evidence on the banks of the river. Even in those days the fields were small, three or four being the average number of starters in each race, but they were the best horses in the country, and competition was keen. Owners were not merely Military Officers and planters, but the old Haileybury Civilians were keen as mustard, and patronised

the turf right royally. In 1806 after the British Army had returned from pursuing the fugitive Holkar, we find young Lieutenant Sir Walter Raleigh Gilbert winning both the Behar Plates at Hajee pore, Sir Walter only retired in 1852, and he was then Major General and a K.C.B., but he raced all the time he was in India.

In 1833 the Hajee pore Race Meeting was a four days' one, and was run by a Lieutenant Gwatkin of the Pusa Stud, the races all of a mile and a half, or more, were run in heats. Arabs predominated; in fact no provision was made in the programme, for any classes but Arabs and country-breds. In 1834 and for the next few years, a Mr. D. W. Fraser, who had been a great racing man on the Bombay and Madras side, was transferred to Sarun, and acted as Secretary; he rode and raced under the name of Mr. Hill, and won a good many races with his string, both in 1834 and succeeding years, on our local courses. A famous Arab called Hoomayoon ran at Hajee pore in 1834. He afterwards, like poor Sting, dropped down dead in Calcutta, after passing the post, having won his race. On the third day of that year the Beharites witnessed one of the gamest struggles ever seen on a race course. Five heats were run for the mile and three quarters, hundred gold mohur cup. Four Arabs, and a country-bred mare, competed, the mare Sapphire, broke down in the third heat, Mr. Charles' Godolphin ridden by Mr. Fraser, proved the winner. In those days the gathering of fair ladies was not as numerous as in 1896 and scarce a dozen graced the ball room. Neither did champagne flow as nowadays, our forbears contenting themselves with the beer of old England. Hodgson's was the favorite tippie then, Hodgson was a very handsome man and ran away with the lovely Mrs. Trower, wife of an Indian Army officer, she was one of the reigning beauties of Paris for many years afterwards. Edwin Abbott, grandfather to Harry, was Hodgson's partner in the Sun Brewery at Wapping, and Bow Brewery on

REMINISCENCES OF SONEPORE.

the Lee, and they made a lot of money out of their "rare good stingo". The following was a song which used to be sung at many a pigstick party and race meeting in the thirties, forties and fifties.

Who has not tasted of Hodgson's pale beer
With its flavour the finest that hops ever gave?
It drives away sadness,—it banishes fear,
And imparts a glad feeling of joy to the grave.

O! to drink it at morning, when just from our bed
We rise unrefreshed, and to breakfast sit down,
The froth-crested brimmer we raise to our head,
And in swigging off Hodgson, our sorrows we drown.

Or to drink it at tiffin, when thirsty and warm,
We say to the khidmutgar, 'bring me some beer,'
Soon, soon do we feel its most magical charm,
And quickly the eatables all disappear.

Or at ev'ning, when home from our ride we return,
And jaded and weary we sit down to dine;
We ask but for Hodgson, and willingly spurn
The choicest—the dearest—the rarest of wine.

Then hail to thee Hodgson! of Brewers the head,
Thy loss we in India would sadly bewail;
May you live long and happy, and when you are dead,
I will think of you daily whilst drinking your ale.

Two days were always devoted to racing at Hajepore in those days, and the present Australian trainers and jockeys were unknown in the land. Neat and dapper little Englishmen, sent out from the best home stables, trained and rode in the forties, fifties and sixties, their masters occasionally figuring in the pigskin as well. Among the professionals in the early forties, was a dry old original, named Jack Barnett, who like many of his class dearly loved to get full whenever opportunity offered; and who was, in consequence, always changing his situations, but he was a good man in the saddle, if locked up the night before the race. Jack was a married man, but his spouse unable to stand his vagaries, left him, and afterwards

contracted a bigamous marriage with an up-country parson. *The news of this did not seem to affect Master Jack much, he merely remarked that she always was fond of the Church, and that he wished the parson joy of her.* Jack's education was not of the highest order, and some of his epistles were fully as delicious as any of Teddy Weekes' graphic productions. Over each horse's stall he had a board covered with foolscap, on which he used to note the amount of grain allowed the occupant. Here is one of his masterpieces of orthography : 'Gra fille wun ser hots for gram', which being interpreted meant, 'grey filly, one seer oats, four gram.' Another equally amusing effort read as follows :—'Ba kolt, three ser hots three gras' which meant 'bay colt, three seers oats, three grass.

One of the last races the old man rode was at Hajeepore, when he won the Mcturjee Cup on Mr. Hill's Smoker after three severe heats. A straight and honest servant, with but the one failing, a too well defined love of the "craythur." It was in 1839 that the races had to be run at Sonapore, the programme for the first meeting was headed "The Sonapore Park Meeting" and the first event run for, was a Silver Breakfast Set presented by the Stud officers, it was won by Mr. Fraser. Mr. Burgess acted as Honorary Secretary and Messrs. Lushington, Napier and Captain Arthur were Stewards. This was the first year of Kenneth McLeod's racing career.

CHAPTER II.

YEARS 1840-46.

As far back as 1840 we find the Maharajahs of Hutwa, Dumraon, Bettiah, and Durbungah, presenting cups, so that for close on sixty years they have been generous patrons of the local turf. Chutterdharee Sahee Bahadoor was then on the throne of Hutwa, while the proud house of Bettiah was represented by Rajah Newul Kishore Singh Bahadoor. In 1844

Captain Lovatt, Mr. DeVaux, and Mr. Lovell were the chief winners. That grand old indigo planter Mr. McLeod (not the well beloved Jimmy of our days) only pulling off one race, the Ladies' Purse with his grey Arab Gregor.

In 1845 and 1846 much the same lot of sportsmen were to the fore, with the addition to their number of Mr. Thomas, a Mr. Norval, and a gentleman racing under the *nom de course* of Mr. Namreh, which but thinly veiled the identity of Mr. Sherman, Managing Proprietor of the Jeetwarpore Indigo concern, in the Tirhoot district. Till he got broke over Indigo, Mr. Sherman was a staunch supporter of both the Sonepore and Mozufferpore Meetings, and some years afterwards his youngest son George, followed worthily in his father's footsteps, owning at different times several good ones, notably Spider, Gamecock, Avenger, and many smart ponies. Both father and son were absolutely straight, ran for the true love of sport, and were most excellent losers. Cape horses were then well to the fore, and had a special scale of weights allotted them. Terribly meagre are the records of those days, for there was no Turf Club to force the easy-going Stewards and Secretaries to furnish a lucid description of the races, the riders' names or weights carried, and it was only when some localite afflicted with the *cacæthes scribendi* thought it incumbent to send an account to *The Sporting Review*, that we find any data to go upon. Frequently these accounts were written weeks after the meeting was over, were based on mere recollection, and are consequently scarcely reliable. A Doctor Sawyers was then one of the most consistent patrons of racing in India, and bore the proud title of Father of the Indian Turf. He owned, bred, and raced many good horses, Cape, English, Arabs and his own country-breds. He took his best Arabian, Selim, home with him in 1846, with a view of having a try for the Goodwood Cup, but of course the game little horse was no good

against even English hacks. Mr. A. de H. Larpent, scion of a well-known old home family was Honorary Secretary of the Calcutta Races, backed up by Messrs. Moffatt-Mills, Hume, Patton (The Squire) and others. Perhaps one of the most remarkable differences between those and modern times, is the difference of treatment accorded to owners. Then owners were the chief donors of purses, and added to that, the charge for entries was abnormally large. In 1846 we find Mr. James Hume, who had taken over the reins of Calcutta, from Mr. A. de H. Larpent, sending round the hat for an Arab Dealers' Plate, and the dealers bled freely; Abdool Ryman and the grand old Sheik Ibrahim putting down their hundred gold mohurs each and Mahomed Bin Ushur fifty, this merely as a preliminary. Then look at the terms of entry "five gold mohurs each, for horses named 1st January, ten gold mohurs 1st April, fifteen gold mohurs 1st July, twenty gold mohurs for each horse declared to start. No horse to start whose owner has not subscribed at least fifty gold mohurs to the plate !!! Great Scot if our ever popular "Flummery" signed his name nowadays to such a programme, would he escape scathing at the hands of sporting writers? In a minor way, Sonapore and Mozufferpore followed suit. The former meeting advertised a forty gold mohur purse, but in addition to expensive entries the Stewards added a sweepstake of 15 gold mohurs as a tax on each starter, to be wolfed by the winner, nothing being voted for either second or third. In fact one looks through the programmes of those days, and searches in vain for any real encouragement to sport; and be it remembered that there were then no blatant bookies, totalisators, or such other gambling mediums, as are in vogue nowadays; so that it stands to reason men ran rather for love of sport than for filthy lucre. In forty-six, the day before the first day's fixture, the Sonapore course was under water, and no galloping was possible; just fancy the misery borne by the lovers of racing,

camping under such circumstances. The bathing day fell early that year, and the first day's racing was consequently fixed for the 29th October, nice and muggy it must have been, and feverish to boot. Two new owners appeared on the scene to do battle with the owners of the previous year's cracks, and fairly held their own, Messrs. Cunningham, and Fulton, the latter was Mr. George Powden; Barnes and Sherburne were the only European professionals present at the meeting. Still in spite of the bad going, and goodness only knows what the experience of the martyred visitors tented on the saturated soil must have been, they spun out the meeting to six days, and seemingly managed to have fairly good fields throughout; but the chronicles go to show that the gathering was confined chiefly to the inferior sex, and that fair women were decidedly in the minority; whereas now the difficulty is to keep down their numbers. The problem of giving dances without champagne seems to be an acknowledged impossibility for secretaries to grasp successfully, and consequently while the racing always shows a surplus, the entertainments scarcely ever cover expenses. Comparatively alongside Sonepore, was the then favorite health-seeker's resort, Monghyr, where one of the best sportsman India has ever been able to boast of, Mr. Wallace, the Calcutta tailor, had started a breeding stud, and some real clinkers he managed to turn out; Meg Merrilies and Grace Darling, could give the best Arabs in India weights and beat them, and the straight-going old Snip collared three Viceroy's Cups with Monghyr country-breds, giving battle to English, Cape and Arab horses. Still does the dear old man, whose tall figure was, even when the writer arrived in India in 1862, a well-known landmark on the Calcutta course, live, and up among the banks and braes of Bonnie Doon, he can perhaps remember how he made for me my first set of colors, the black and yellow stripes which I have never forsaken. Moreover he refused to accept payment

for them, on the ground that a youngster who did not mind what he got up on, should not be made to pay for his jacket. 'May he see the century out, but India will never be able to boast of a straighter or truer sportsman, than he, who for so many years held the flag at the premier meeting. Barker one of the best jockeys and trainers of those days was then training at Mozufferpore, and he had some rare good ones under his charge, Battledore, Paris, Eous, Toby and others. Messrs. Darcy, Grey, and Fitzpatrick were additions to the Sonepore patrons in 1847, training at their own head centres, while Mr. Cunningham trained at Sonepore itself. Chupra, too, was not devoid of sporting elements, for a goodly array of horses used to appear every morning on its race course, Mr. DeVaux having at least a dozen in training, while Mr. Walker had some expensive ones, under the charge of a promising young amateur Mr. Forrester who *in propria persona* was Mr. Charles Campbell, a Civilian. Sonepore was then described by the sporting papers as the First Provincial Meeting in India. Mr. Hewett, the Opium Agent of Chupra, whose racing name was Mr. Hawke, was its Honorary Secretary, and it says something for the sporting feeling of the Chupra district, that up to date the residents have done their best not to let the time-honored fixture deteriorate.

CHAPTER III.

YEAR 1847.

Eighteen-forty-seven seems to have been a most successful year. Mr. Hewett had evidently worked the meeting up, and for the first time on record six European professionals were seen donning silk for the Maiden Arab race—Barker, Baker, Barnes, Watling, Ross and Sherburne. Mr. Fitzpatrick's Honeysuckle won the blue ribbon after a good race with Mr. Fulton's Chancellor.

The best race of all was, as is usual at Sonepore, the Durbangah Cup, a mile and three quarters, George Barker

when close to the winning post bringing up Mr. Green's Cape horse Battledore, and defeating by a neck Mr. Walker's bay Arab, Cadwallader, who was favorite, but the Welshman, turned the tables on his conqueror the next day, and after winning the mile and three-quarters Chumparun Cup, this game Arab came out and beat Battledore, who was fresh, in a mile and a half sweepstakes, truly a grand performance. He also won the Sonapore Cup on the third day, and the Civilians' Cup on the fourth; not starting on the fifth and sixth days as he had to return to Calcutta. Four wins and one second out of five starts; and C. Barker declared he would have won the Durbangah Cup, but for being shut in at the distance. Mr. Fulton was the *nom de course* of Mr. George Plowden, a scion of a family which has always provided a vast majority of sportsmen to the country. It was in 1831 that George Plowden, a long, lean weed of a sucking civilian, made his *début* in silk at the Hajee pore meeting, he was built to ride, and his maiden effort was a winning one, over hurdles too, and against such good riders as Messrs. James, Charles Quintin and A. Dick, the latter a smasher. It was only in 1846 that he bloomed fourth as an owner. Another sportsman, better known to our Behar residents, who used to figure in the pig-skin at Hajee pore before the course was transferred to Sonapore in 1839, was handsome Fred Collingridge, that wonderful old evergreen planter, who can still hold his own with the hounds in England. It was during this year, that the present father of the Behar planting community, Mr. Minden James Wilson, came up to Tirhoot from the Mauritius and started as an assistant at Kuntoul then under the management of Mr. James Wilson his elder brother; Minden's first introduction to an indigo planter was when he arrived per palkee early in the morning at Munjowl Factory, where he was received by Mr. Phil Crump, the manager, who was gorgeously arrayed in a black velvet cap, knee breeches, top boots and a bright

colored dressing gown, a costume he seemingly never got out of, save when in bed.

CHAPTER IV.

YEAR 1848.

During 1848 Mr. Hewett still held office, and elaborate indeed was the programme published for that year, but the meeting was still marred by the heavy disproportion of entries and stakes, 25 gold mohurs being the entrance money for the Rs. 500 Durbungah Cup. The rules laid down in those days, must have been a puzzle to owners, no less than thirty-seven appearing at the end of the programme; yet entries were good. in spite of the heavy taxation, and the fact that times were more than usually bad, for this meeting followed on the disastrous failure of the Union Bank, which had been started by Mr. Larpent and Baboo Dwarkanath Tagore, and went smash, owing over a crore of rupees. Poor Dwarkanath committed suicide. The closing of the Bank doors brought grief to hundreds of shareholders, and then to add to the troubles, the proud house of Cockerell and Company suspended payment. Still Sonapore was as gay as ever, and the pretty girls of Behar footed it none the less merrily than when the fickle goddess had smiled more sweetly upon her votaries. Honeysuckle, the game grey Arab, of Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was a sporting Calcutta dentist, and which ran so well the previous year, and at Calcutta had put down the mighty Elipoo, had met a watery grave when crossing the Ganges, in the illfated *Benares*; Baker his trainer and rider going down too. But Mr. Fitzpatrick had a decent maiden Arab called Clear-the-way, and a couple of good maiden Australians, one, Woodbine, a fine looking mare; Ould Ireland, and the Cape horse Sir Harry, were also among his string, which was now under the charge of Evans. On the Chupra course, the local sportsmen Messrs. DeVaux, Walker, and Grey, were working

their respective lots, Mr. Campbell still training for the two latter sportsmen. Mr. DeVaux had Brunette a waler, a Cape yclept Voltaire, and a rattling good country-bred called Vanguard; a maiden Arab Sultan, and others. Old Cadwallader, and Bendigo, a ragged-looking four year old English colt, Quicksilver, and Intrepid with a couple of country-breds comprised Mr. Grey's stud. G. Barker, and Hall, were training at Mozufferpore. Even Mirzapore could boast of a racing string that year, Mr. Fox having a Cape mare, and two maiden Arabs, training under C. Barker. The meeting of '48 was much marred by a lot of transfers among the local officials, which greatly affected the camps. Racing opened with the Sonapore Derby for maiden Arabs, for which six came to the post out of twenty entered, the favourite, Don Juan, ridden by Joy, won easily. The Don was the property of a gentleman running as Mr. Charles, in reality Mr. J. Johnstone, a real bruiser over a country. He was the first importer of any Australian of decent breeding, a chestnut, called Selim. The Sonapore Colonials was won by the local sportsman Mr. Campbell with his chestnut country-bred Pretender, ridden by Sherburne, beating three Australians, of whom Mr. Fitzpatrick's Woodbine was made a hot favourite. Sherburne followed up his luck by scoring again in the Durbungah Cup, winning it for Mr. Williams on an Australian mare called Greenmantle, the great Arab, Cadwallader, second. The surplus of funds accruing from the previous year had enabled Mr. Hewett to offer the handsome prize of sixteen hundred rupees for a $2\frac{1}{2}$ mile handicap. They were not afraid of distances then. An attempt was made that year to inaugurate a Behar Turf Club, but it fell through for want of unanimity. The Bettiah Cup, on the second day, fell to Pretender, Barnes steering him; the crack maiden, Child of the Isles, a beautiful high caste bay, running third, the Australian Brunswick splitting the pair.

Maid of Athens, a comparatively unknown English filly, upset a big pot, and waltzed home for the Doomraon Cup, beating Mr. Charles' Arab Repudiaton, and Mr. Fitzpatrick's country-bred Carlotta, who started a hot favorite. On the third day, although only three horses started for the Civilians' Cup, Brunswick, Greenmantle, and Prestwick, it proved a great race, the first and last were stable companions, Joy on Prestwick made running for Brunswick, not a length divided the three, Brunswick beat Greenmantle by a head. Then Referee beat Cadwallader and Lunatic, in the Welter, and the Australian Nimrod easily beat the Arab Ugly Buck in the last event but one. Peter Irving scored with a Pusa reared country-bred filly, Miss Julia, in the Pusa Oaks. The fourth day opened with the Sonepore Cup—fifty gold mohurs—a slow run race, resulting in a dead heat between the Australians Prestwick and Greenmantle, the rival jockeys Barker and Sherburne in the saddle; the gelding won the run off easily. Two races followed, two horses only competing in each, and then the Arab Referee finished a poor day's racing, by winning Rajah Modernarain's Cup, beating the vaunted Selim. The fifth day opened well, four good maiden Arabs going out to compete for the Hutwa Cup, a race to be run in mile heats. Pluto won the first heat, Sultan running second, and Repudiaton third but the next, two heats were won easily by the latter, Pluto second in each. Two walks over for Minuet, and Greenmantle, and then a fine field of eight stripped for the sixteen hundred rupee contest, which Brunswick won with fair ease, doing $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles in 4mins., 21secs., decent going for the class. The last day saw the country-bred Pretender, who had only been six weeks in training, open the ball by pulling off the first race for Mr. Forrester, the Australian Prestwick having to be content with second honors. Then Cadwallader beat an English filly, Alice, and a poor meeting finished, by the Cape Voltaire winning both the heats in the Consolation Purse. It was the year pre-

vious to this, that the first properly organised Calcutta Turf Club was started by thirty-six gentlemen. Messrs. Stainforth, Beckwith, Grey, Grant and Fergusson, being the members of committee, Mr. James Hume the *Able East* of the *Sporting Review*, Secretary; the racing Stewards for the year were J. Beckwith, G. Bushby, W. Grey, Captain Lang, and last, but not least, *debonair*, Charley Marten, brightest, cheeriest, and straightest of sportsmen. One of the most conspicuous figures on Bengal, and Behar race courses, at the time we write of, was the famous Calcutta Arab horse Commission Agent Sheik Ibrahim Bin-Alee, a native of the Nedsjed, who came to India about 1820, accompanying a Colonel Lithfield, who had been sent to Arabia to buy horses on Government account. He went back to his native land, and brought to Bombay, and Madras, several shipments of horses, with which, being a born judge, he did well. Meanwhile Colonel Lithfield had established a depôt at Bussorah and in connection with a Doctor Todd, and a Colonel Taylor, got up some races. The wily Sheik scented plunder in the air, and wending his way thither won every race, on a single horse of his own selection, meeting in most cases fresh animals. Four or five years afterwards he came to Calcutta, and was at first located at Messrs Cook and Company's. A dealer he could scarcely be termed, as for the major portion of his career, he acted merely as a Commission Agent. But the influx of Australian racing stock to the Calcutta market, ruined the Arab trade, and broke up the Sheik's business, his courteous and equally straight partner Esau Bin Courtas leaving for Bombay about twenty years ago, where he died, to the regret of many Calcutta European friends who could like and respect one who, though merely an Arab of the desert, was every inch a man, a gentleman and a sportsman.

CHAPTER V.

YEAR 1849.

In spite of the poor support afforded the meeting in '48, we find the Stewards putting forth a six days' programme for the fixture of 1849, the dates running from 27th October to 8th November. Mr. Hewett had evidently flung down the reins, for the name of Mr. F. Harbord of Patna appears as Honorary Secretary. First entries were fairly promising, most of the patrons of former years weighing in with nominations, a decided increase being observable in the number of Australians. But if '48 was disheartening to all concerned, save the winners, '49 was even more deplorable; for a profound listlessness and indifference characterised the meeting. The names of De Vaux, Williams, Grey, Charles, Cunningham, Return and D'Arcy were absentees, even Mr. Campbell appeared not in the pigskin, and Pretender sailed under other colors than those of the Chupra amateur, having been sold to Mr. Holdfast, a name under which Mr. George Plowden was now running. As early as the fifth of September it was evident that three of the big events were bound to fall through, and when the sportsmen assembled under the mangoe tope, their interests and suggestions were so varied, that it was difficult for the Stewards to decide what sort of conditions would ensure decent fields. Mr. Holdfast, a good name that for a greedy one, held fast to three cups, claiming that the terms of entry having been fulfilled he could walk over for them; and walk over he did for the Chumparun, Doomraon, and Civilians' Cups, as well as for the Durbangah one. The first day opened with the Maiden Arab Race, for which Mr. Holdfast's Blood-royal, Mr. Fox's Gull, and Mr. Seymour's Soothsayer, sauntered out to do battle, finishing in a very slack manner as placed. Little or no enthusiasm was shown by the Europeans in the racing, but the shouts from the Aryan on-lookers, of "Wa, wa Collector Saheb ka ghora jita," whenever the Magistrate's horses won, showed that Civilians were better known and

appreciated in those days than now, by our dusky brethren; for what with the perpetual changing, and the want of sport and pageantry shown by present officials, added to the perpetual upheavals of their authority by the far too numerous courts of appeal, our Government authorities are held in but small reverence, by the masses they are supposed to rule over. For the Colonials, only two faced the starter, Firefly and Woodbine, the latter pulled up half a mile from home, and Mr. Holdfast secured a second inglorious victory. He then walked over for the Durbangah Cup with Bellona, and so ended the first day; *i.e.*, five horses altogether putting in an appearance, the winners scarcely being asked to canter. The second day was almost as discouraging, Mr. Holdfast walked over for three races, and one race only came off, the Sonepore Cup, for which Mr. Holdfast sent out Bonanza and Pretender, his pair being opposed by Mr. Fitzpatrick's Referee, Mr. Holdfast declared to win with his worst, Bonanza, and a sort of *dhoby's* donkey race was the result, the two miles being run in four minutes, and Barnes had nearly to break Pretender's jaw to hold him back; *Toujours* Mr. Holdfast, and yet a round dozen had entered for this handsome prize of 50 gold mohurs. Even the very heavens could not refrain from mourning over such a decadence of sport, and on Wednesday the clouds wept copiously. Only those who have suffered at a wet Sonepore can tell the awful misery entailed on the visitors, when slowly but surely the drawing room shamiana collapses in the centre, and the only dry roofings are those of the dining room and bedroom tents. Underfoot, the rain water invades these merrily; yet given good sport during the previous days, and prospects of better when the clouds clear, spirits can be kept up by pouring spirits down. But verily the Sonepore of 1849 was a damper alike to man and beast. Now it is a well-known fact from one end of Indian sporting circles to the other, that meetings are made or marred by a judicious selec-

tion of secretaries, or the reverse. In those days Mr. Larpent had made the Calcutta Race Meetings what they were, just as Charley Marten did afterwards, and Ben Roberts as his successor. See what Neild, Renton, Turnbull and Kitty Apthorp have done for Lucknow, what poor Schuyller did for Rangoon, and ye gods what a chaotic mess has been made of Burma racing under the mismanaging duffers since his day. Tom Le Mesurier keeps Bombay, and Poona, together, and Vinicombe Davis made Vizianagram. Never was the difference between good and bad management better illustrated than was the case at this Sonapore under review. Mr. Harbord who, in a combined spirit of good nature and false appreciation of his own capacity, had taken up the reins, flung down in a regrettable if natural enough pet by Hewett, proved incapable of bringing horses to the post, and under the dripping canvas ungenerous and thoughtless murmurs were raised against his management. Mr. Hewett happened to be a member of one of the camps, and to him hied a body of the disaffected. "Pull us out of the hole" was the cry, and with the usual Cromwellian "Take away this bauble" he said he'd do his best. Poor Harbord, like the proverbial pursued ostrich, tried to hide his diminished head, and watched the rest of the meeting with mingled feelings of scorn and contempt. But the ablest men fail when trying to make bricks without straw, and when even Jews failed, at that game, small blame to Mr. Hewett, if without horses or jockeys he could do no better than let the third day's events fall through, and then for the fourth day get up a couple of events, one a half mile scurry, and the other Rajah Modernarain's purse of Rs. 500 with G. Rs. up; the reason for this clause being that all but one or two professionals had fled the scene. Into the lottery room gathered about ten o'clock, a few of those determined to do their ultimatum to make things buzz; but not even the charming of the Bayard who had come

to the rescue, could induce the weary lot present to toss for tickets, on what looked like another dead certainty for the blooming Collector Saheb. But as the Ettrick Shepherd tells us "The best laid plans of men and mice aft gang agley," and beautifully in this instance, was it illustrated; for the first time at the meeting did the "semper triumphans" one go wrong. He put up a festive youth who had eaten and drank far too freely at the previous night's supper, with the foregone conclusion that a turkey, ham, brandy and soda combination are not the concomitants to make victory a foregone conclusion; the astute Mr. Fitzpatrick owning a far worse nag than the Australian Firefly, in the Arab Referee, abstained studiously from the craytur overnight, and scored cleverly and, amidst shouts of "Ould Oireland for ever," he passed the post first with a broad smile of delight on his benevolent countenance. This is the cruel record of this never enough to be anathemised day; for the 'Civilians' Cup Mr. Holdfast's g. a. h. Blood Royal walked over. The Sonapore Welter fell through, ditto the sweepstakes. A half mile Scurry which brought two starters only, was won by a lame Cabullee horse, ridden by a youth with a loose rein and one stirrup gone, the one excitement being provided by the upset of Firefly by Referee. Still did Mr. Hewett bravely persevere where others would have flung up the sponge in disgust, but the fifth day was merely a repetition of the gormandising, Mr. Holdfast winning the only two races that filled, with Pretender and Blood Royal. The sixth day was equally a failure, one race the Forced Handicap bringing out three starters, all of the poorest quality, again the monopolist winning. And then a wee-bit of balm to Gilead was accorded by Mr. Hawke's country-bred Alice easily defeating a poor field of four, one of Mr. Holdfast's among the number. To show how good a position Sonapore held up to this as a meeting, Mr. Plowden *alias* Holdfast went down to Calcutta and cleared the board there.

Mr. Charles, who was better known by his nick-name of Josto the King of Spears, and was *in propria persona* Mr. J. Johnstone, an ancestor of the present popular Calcutta sportsman of the same name, was the only other winner to any extent.

CHAPTER VI.

YEARS 1850-51.

For 1850, we again find Mr. Hewett in charge, but advertising only a five days' meeting, and in spite of the *fiasco* of 1849, the 1st of June entries were promising, a few new owners, too, figuring in the list, Messrs. Mortlock who was Edward Studd, Monghyr, and Cartwright, but the old opponents Messrs. Holdfast, Charles, and Fitzpatrick showed up strongly, the two former entering half a dozen each in the Civilians' Cup. Mr. Charles' string in charge of Joy had been training at Chupra, Barnes had Mr. Holdfast's lot at Mozufferpore, the course was then situated at Secunderapore, but was being rapidly cut away by the river. Stubbs was working Mr. Fitzpatrick's stable at Bankipore, Mr. Wallace had his exercising at Monghyr, and a few were using the perfect galloping track at Pusa. Sonapore had in those days one advantage over its present state, it had a fine lot of permanent mud built loose boxes, which were freely made use of in the hot weather by local owners and trainers. The most that can be said for the opening day is, that it was a little better than that of 1849; four stripped for the Derby, all new to fame, and belonging to rival owners. Mr. Holdfast's good luck once more stood him in stead, and Do-the-Boys carried his colors cleverly to the front. He followed this up by winning the Colonials with Van Diemen, the Durbangah Cup with the gallant country-bred Pretender, best of his class ever seen our course the mile sweepstakes with Do-the-Boys, beating the crack grey Don Juan, and finished the morning by pulling out Van Dieman again and winning the Syed's

Plate with him ; every race in the card falling to him. On the second day only two races filled, the Bettiah Cup bringing three to the post, two of which belonged to Mr. Holdfast, whose Pretender gave Van Dieman and Young Zorab two stone and a beating round the course. Then out came Van Dieman again, and round the course beat Mr. Charles' English filly Catherine of Arragon for the Doomraon Cup. At last Mr. Charles scored, but merely the barren honors of a walk over for the Welter, that ended an inglorious day. On the third day one race alone filled, with two competitors, Mr. Holdfast collaring the Civilians' Cup with Pretender, Zorab his sole opponent bolting off the course, then Zorab walked over for Rajah Modernarain's Cup, and sportsmen went back to their tents to mourn over the departed glories of the once grand meeting. On the fourth day two races filled, Pretender winning the Turf Club Cup from Boomerang, and then Mr. Charles sent out two to win a two hundred rupee purse, Mr. Holdfast entering a duffer to make a race. One race won by Mr. Charles with Boomerang on the last day, all other events failing to fill, ended a truly awful meeting, enough to break the heart of all connected with it. To pass the time, hack races and foot races were got up. But the cup of Mr. Hewett was full to overflowing, and feeling the utter hopelessness of rectifying matters, he resigned *in toto*, and said some one else might take up the reins, and who could blame him.

Far enough afield the Stewards had to go to find any one bold enough to endeavour to restore the fallen fortunes of Sonepore, but Arrah came to the rescue, Mr. R. J. Dickenson of that station volunteering to take up the thankless post of Honorary Secretary, and as early in 1851 as the first of February a programme was published for a five days' meeting, commencing on the 5th November. But the deterioration of Sonepore, could scarcely be attributed to mismanagement,

as it was undoubtedly due to the financial depression caused by the big failures in the metropolis, and discouragement cast on racing by those then in authority. The big Calcutta meeting suffered equally with the fashionable Behar one, poor fields, and small excitement; Messrs. Plowden and Charles pretty well dividing between them what spoil there was to be lifted. The former gentleman came in for severe criticism at Calcutta, having instructed Barnes to pull Do-the-Boys, the Sonepore Derby winner, to let his other string Blood Royal win, without having declared to win with the latter, although as the Stewards had omitted to ask his intentions, no enquiry was held, but the episode shows how lax management was in those days, even at the premier meeting. General Sir Walter Raleigh Gilbert, G.C.B., one of the leading north-west sportsmen, and who had for 48 years been a patron of Indian racing, training and riding his own horses, retired this year throwing a further damper on upcountry racing. In 1806 young Gilbert had won both the Behar plates, on the Hajipore course, with Sky Blue. In 1851 Mozufferpore seemed, as well as Sonepore, in a bad way, for the local scribe wrote of it—"Tirhoot had no racing men, no seasoned sporting character, racing was disapproved of, and consequently there would be no racing," and yet three years before this, three public trainers were training on the course, and no serious damage to public morality had seemingly been the result of allowing these ungodly men to live in the station. An unpopular, Collector at Mozufferpore had a good deal to do with it. He was a Mr. George Lewis Martin, whom "General" Argles described as too big for his breeches. He had married one of the daughters of the Honorable R. Forbes, the Judge, Alec Russell, the Joint Magistrate, a good chap had taken the other, but the Martins were very much too good for human nature's daily food. Messrs. Holdfast, Charles, Return and Fitzpatrick, who had so staunchly stood by Sonepore, gave

out early in the year, they were unlikely to race there again, and bluer than ever in consequence, looked the prospects for the coming meeting. A dullness and apathy in everything connected with racing, seemed to be settling over Behar, like a funeral pall; thoughat Pusah good old Colonel Apperley, a son of the gallant Nimrod and then in charge of the stud, offered to throw open his course and hospitable house, to any horses and men that cared to come and train there. Strong was the veteran's language against the deplorable want of go and independence among the local civilians and planters, whom he characterised as a lot of sycophants, but to no purpose did he moralise, and it was not till Lord Ulick Browne came, like a Bayard to the rescue, that Mozufferpore flourished again. Alec Russell and Frank Drummond backed him up warmly. There was an uncommonly good native jockey in those days, who used to ride at Sonepore, his name was Panchoo Khan, he was quite as fine a horseman as was afterwards Jaffir Khan, and had the nickname of the Chifney of the East. Panchoo, who was at this time about forty-six years of age, was the son of the Jemadar of a Tirhoot planter named Perry, who kept a pack of hounds as far back as 1811, and who made the lad whipper-in when some eight years old; teaching him to ride a loose horse barebacked. Panchoo first donned silk at Sonepore in 1822, but after Mr. Perry retired to England, he went up to the North-west, where his career was very successful. He was trusted and liked, not only by his many employers, but fully as much by European professionals. Dr. Ogilvie, Mr. Patton and Mr. Russell were his chief patrons in Behar, after Mr. Perry; he frequently outrode such exceptionally fine horsemen, as Robert Ross, C. Barker, and Barnes. Ross was a jockey whose steadiness and business capacity stood him in such good stead, that he finished his career as head-partner of the famous house of Cook and Co., Calcutta. Barker more

than once stood down in favor of Panchoo, openly telling his master, that the horses went better with the old man than with him. All that can be said for the Sonepore racing of 1851, is that it was an improvement on its predecessor. The stables represented were those of Mr. Monghyr (Wallace), Mr. Arthur, (Frank Vincent) Mr. Cloud, (Kenneth McLeod) of Chupra, and Barnes the jockey, under cover of whose name Edward Studd was now racing. The opening race for the first day was the Durbangah Cup, for which only two faced the flag, the brown Australian Van Dieman, belonging to Mr. Studd beating the local indigo king's Emperor, with Abdool in the saddle; this was the same Abdool who was afterwards with the late Mr. Gwatkin Williams, and Harry Abbott; he died some years back at Situlpore Factory where his son is head lad to Mr. Lockhart. All the other races having fallen through, an impromptu hack race for all untrained horses, G.R's only, three quarters of a mile, was got up, and won by a horse of Mr. McLeod's, called Volunteer, but the rider was overweight, and Messrs. Fraser (McDonell) and Cleveland who had run a deadheat for second place, divided the stakes. Again on the second day, for the Bettiah Cup, the race resolved itself into a duel between Van Dieman and Emperor, but the former won more easily than on Thursday. A walk over by Young Lucifer for the Doomraon Cup, was followed by Mr. Wallace's piloting to victory his own English horse Bedford, in the mile hack race, beating Volunteer. The third day gave Barnes another walk over with Van Dieman, the prize being Rajah Modenarain's Cup. A mile sweepstakes brought out a field of four, three of which belonged to Mr. Studd the fourth, Bedford, to Mr. Wallace, and in spite of the odds against him, and that he carried the crusher of 12st. 4lbs., the English colt got home. On the fourth day Barnes for Mr. Studd walked over for the Civilians' Cup with Van Dieman, and for the Free Handicap with Young Lucifer; and then came a fairly

decent race, a free handicap R. C., won by Bedford, who the next day collared the forced handicap as well. Emperor beat Nimrod for the R. C. handicap for losers, and then a good mile race in heats was witnessed for the Consolation Stakes, Edward Morgan winning the first heat; Emperor, the second and third. Socially the meeting was successful, lovely weather and a goodly gathering of local planters and civilians, a fair contingent from Calcutta, and the officers and their ladies from both Dinapore, and Segowlie, which was then a favorite military station. In September '51 Lord Ulick Browne arrived in this country and very soon began to patronise the turf. In December he rode his own mare Jessie second to Mr. Studd's Edward Morgan at Calcutta. He took the racing name of Westport which was the place where the breeding stud of his father Lord Sligo was located and where he bred many fine horses his favorite sire being the celebrated Waxy.

CHAPTER VII.

YEARS 1852-53.

The Sonepore of 1852 was a poor meeting, Dick Richardson, then Magistrate of Chupra, acted as Secretary, but there is nothing worth chronicling. Lord Ulick Browne steered for Kenneth McLeod, and got home twice.

For 1853 the management of the meeting had again changed hands, and we find Mr. Arthur (Frank Vincent) acting as Secretary. Decidedly better racing was witnessed, though the gathering of the clans was smaller, owing probably to the yearly increasing dullness of the racing. Mr. Wallace brought a strong string, headed by the afterwards famous country-bred filly Grace Lee, who, ridden by the crack English jock Peter Irving, opened the ball by winning the Maiden Purse, beating Mr. Gough's English mare Diana, and another good, but somewhat leggy country-bred, Lola Montez, owned by Edward Studd, this year running again as Mr. Mortlock.

Mr. Gough, was Commissioner of Patna, and father of Sir Charles and Sir Hugh Gough. Although only two came out for the Durbangah Cup, yet the race round the course caused a lot of excitement; as the contest lay between the two supposed best horses of the year, Babylonian and Valentine, both English and ridden by English professionals, but Irving completely out-rode Marwood, and kidding him right through the race, landed Babylonian an easy winner. Mr. Studd's Edward Morgan then made strong running in the Untrained Horse Stakes, and never being headed from start to finish, won easily; no more racing that day. Studd had bought Edward Morgan from Pusa for Rs. 400 as a trapper; he used to pull like a demon, and once cleared out on the Serryah road with Studd, Paddy Cox, and Minden Wilson all hanging on to the double reins. He got worm in the eye, and cute old Studd thinking he'd go "Kumree", sold him to Simmy (H. B. Simson) who made a pot of money with him, much to Studd's disgust. Thursday's proceedings opened with a purse of 35 gold mohurs for English maidens, R.C.; only Mr. Monghyr's Martaban, and Mr. Gough's Diana stripped for it, and to the astonishment of onlookers, instead of the stable jockey Marwood, Irving, an outsider, was put up on the mare, whom the public had made a hot favorite at the previous night's lotteries. In the race Irving was supposed to have either pulled the mare, or to have ridden execrably. The following account of the race shows what public opinion was:—"Betting at starting 2 to 1 on Diana, who got away first, and led to the Welter post where she seemed most unaccountably to slacken her pace, and on the gelding passing her, she bolted into the neighbouring field; on which Martaban was cantered for the next three-quarters of a mile, the mare being brought back again was set going as fast as she could, and on nearing the distance got within three lengths of Martaban. Irving then most injudiciously flogged and spurred her for the next fifty yards,

but to little purpose, Martaban winning in a canter." The public seemingly contented themselves with grumbling. Mr. Gough's and Marwood's story was that the mare was a bad-tempered beast, and Irving being stronger than Marwood was put up to try and keep her on the course, but failed. To further prove this, a native was put on her in the Civilians' Cup, and she appeared to be doing her best to go off at the home turn, but being hit freely over the head kept straight, though she ran last; and throughout the meeting her running was so consistently shifty, that it was evident the stable was right, and the public wrong. Dashwood was Mr. Gough's racing name. Mr. Monghyr won the next two events with Annette, and Rejected, thus collaring the whole of the day's prizes, a performance he repeated on Saturday, two out of the three races being credited to Rejected. In the third Grace Lee made mincemeat of the English nags Valentine and Diana, a great triumph for the local country-bred. On Tuesday Mr. Monghyr walked over with Grace Lee for the Sonepore Cup, and then four started for the R.-C. handicap for Rajah Modenarain's Cup, three of whom were heavily backed. Mr. Studd's Valentine won after a good race with the despised Emperor, and Mr. Westport's (Lord Ulick) Madonna, owner up, was adjudged winner of the hack race, but only because a cross was claimed and allowed against Tasso, the favorite, whose owner failed to hold him straight; an Arab hack race won by Mr. Fraser McDonell's Beppo, and the jade Diana walking over for the Maiden Purse ended that day. On Wednesday night the excitement at the lotteries was great, the forced handicap for winners being considered an excellent one, and ticket takers were eager to toss, and owners wanted twenty tickets each if they could get them; Babylonian was favourite at 33 gold mohurs, Valentine going for 29, and Diana for 13, the result showed public estimation to be sound, for they finished, Babylonian, Valentine, Diana. Mr. Gough then had a turn of luck, appropriating the

Lösers' Handicap with Emperor, and Mr. Vincent's Tasso who had been disqualified for a cross on Tuesday, today, with Petet Irving up, won the handicap for untrained hacks, in a dhoby's donkey's canter. To finish up a short day on the 16th, a ten mile race was improvised, four nags started, a native gentleman rode his own horse and finished the course, Mr. Vincent's Hector won it, but on going to scale the first three were disqualified for over weight, their saddle cloths having absorbed so much perspiration, and the fourth had sent his horse away, not thinking there was any necessity for him to weigh, being last. The Monghyr stable had carried off most of the plums, and it continued its triumphs at a poor meeting in Calcutta, the handsome Grace Lee winning the Colonials and Merchants' Plate. In those days there was no railway, and horses marched from Sonapore to Calcutta. Slowly but surely the influx of Australians and English horses, was driving the game, but slow Arabians, to the wall, and instead of thirty to forty of them entering, and a round dozen starting at Sonapore, as they did in 1847 and 1848, we find only one race filled by them in 1853.*

CHAPTER VIII.

YEARS 1854-55.

For 1854 Mr. Vincent still acted as Secretary, but with the poorer meeting of 1853, and the still poorer show in Calcutta, old owners retiring, and but very few replacing them, it looked very like a forlorn hope. One of the chief reasons seemed to be that Government had steadily set its face against its employés racing, and though the military cared not, yet the civilians found it detrimental to their careers if they defied their seniors. We of today know too well the difference it makes to Sonapore, if we have a sporting, or non-sporting Commissioner at Patna. *Ichabod* was what, as far as first-class racing went, had now to be written

over the Sonepore Grand Stand, and finding not a single stable or owner weighing in with entries, Mr. Vincent was sensible enough to re-frame his programme into a sky-one, and the time-honored course which had seen the winners of Viceroys' Cups, and Merchants' Plates, competing on it, had now to be content to be degraded into a sort of Margate sands, for hacks and harness horses to perform on. As a race meeting it is not worth chronicling, though the planters and a few local civilians mustered in force, and riding their own crocks, had a high old jollification. Old tiger Cockburn from Doomra, in the Setamurhi Division, steered his nag in winner of The Pony Stakes, the first pony race that ever dishonored Sonepore. Fraser McDonell, Fred Collingridge, Herewald Wake, Lord Ulick, and Mr. Vincent were among the amateur jocks of the year, so too was H. B. Simson, who rode and raced under the name of Mr. Pitcorthie. He was better known afterwards as "Judex" of the *Oriental Sporting Magazine*, and latterly of the *Asian*. The meet started in rain, the first day's racing was run fetlock deep in muck, and the horses paddled rather than galloped. Throughout, the weather was more or less unfavourable, but the visitors put up with it, and at the lotteries one night, and the dances and suppers the next, contrived to make things hum. But oh for the glory departed, and alas for the deterioration of sport. Simmy had bought the one-eyed Edward Morgan, and changed his name to "Here-I-go-with my-eye-out," and on him he won a lot of races, continuing his triumphs with the old horse at Mozufferpore and Bhagulpore. Simmy was riding him one day at Mozufferpore and the brute bolted depositing Simmy in a potato field near Dr. Hindmarsh's present house. Few keener sportsmen, or better judges of a horse, ever lived than Simmy, and we are glad to still see his silver locks and beard, when he makes his yearly visit to Calcutta to see his son. Taking up the Secretaryship when the Fund was in debt, Frank Vincent in 1853

collected the record subscription, Ten thousand rupees, and he handed over the till to his successor with Rs. 3,000 cash. It was Mr. Vincent who first appointed Behary Singh, who, up to the time that he was deprived of the lease of the ghats by Mr. O'Donnell, two years ago, was one of the most notable figures of Sonapore. Mr. Vincent made him chokeydar of the course on Rs. 3 a month. 17115

Mr. Fraser McDonell took up the reins for 1855, and it is wonderful to see that, after such a succession of fiascoes, donors could still be found to come forward with handsome prizes; prospects looked much more promising for this year. Mr. Wallace had entered a strong string headed by the old platers Rejected, and Grace Lee, and an English maiden Legerdemain; Mr. McLeod had four, and the Confederates Lord Ulick Browne and Frank Vincent five. Mr. McLeod had bought Diana, who was reported to have improved considerably in temper. Simmy had once more changed Edward Morgan's name, this time to The Duke of Sonapore. Mr. Wallace was training this year at Sonapore, and had engaged Peter Irving to ride. Professionals turned up in force, and besides Irving, we find Hartley, Curran, a soldier of the Dinapore Garrison, whose discharge Mr. McLeod had purchased, and Barnes, a crusty misshapen little man, figuring, and in addition to the old G.R.s, Tom Gibbon and a local soldier Jack Lambert, then handsome young bucks, gave the girls in the grand stand a taste of their quailty. The Bettiah Cup, as usual, opened the meeting, Legerdemain being opposed by the Confederates' Hero, and Mr. McLeod's Firetail, the latter fired her native jockey over her head, going down to the post, and cantered off the course, not appearing again; Meer Khan escaped with a broken collar-bone. The race was a hollow affair, Irving winning on Legerdemain easily. Then came the Doomraon Cup, round the course, for which again the three big stables alone com-

peted, but the excitement over it was great, as not only was Mr. McLeod's Arab Chancery much fancied and admired, but the rival breeders of Meg Merrillies, and Helen, were equally confident of their candidates' capacity to win. Meg, bred by Mr. Wallace at Monghyr, was by Crassus, and therefore a half sister to the famous Grace Lee, and was a big roomy leggy mare. Helen, bred at Barrh, by Mr. Vincent, an equally good sportsman, whose son Glass Vincent follows sportingly his sire's example, was also by Crassus, but very different in looks from the coarser Meg, being all quality; a dainty little bit of stuff and a beautiful mover was Helen, her dam an Arab mare, once the property of Runjeet Singh. The country-breds let the Arab force the pace up to the mile post, when they collared him, and a terrific race ensued, the sisters gamely contesting every inch, though the stupid Abdool was galloping on the extreme outside; Irving's, superior and stronger riding wore down Abdool at the finish but he only squeezed home by a head, midst deafening cheers. Abdool came in for some bitter remarks from the bystanders as he rode the game little chestnut three year-old filly back into the paddock, but they were scarcely fair, for all native jockeys are liable to lose their heads in a close contest, when pitted against a crack European professional, and Peter Irving was all that. The Galloway Stakes brought five local gees to the post, and Mr. McLeod had the satisfaction of an easy win with his Arab, Chocolate, and then Mr. Herewald pulled off the Hack Stakes with a nicelooking country-bred called Nell Gwynne, Mr. Lambert second on the Chupra mare Maggie Lauder. Mr. Herewald was Mr. Herewald Wake, the Civilian who held Arrah House in the Mutiny, he was said to be a lineal descendant of the ancient hero of the same name. This ended a really good day's sport. The weather lovely, and prizes pretty evenly distributed, they would have been more so had Abdool ridden Helen with judgment. Teddy Oakes who

was at Sonepore that year, was a Subaltern in the regiment which mutinied at Dinapore, he was a bit of a character and a born gambler; he married Miss Cook, daughter of the famous old Zemindar of Busti. Teddy was supposed to have made a lot of money afterwards in the mutiny, besides loot at Lucknow, he made many a cute deal with Tommy Atkins. He used to go about with a bottle of brandy in his pocket, and when he saw a Tommy with a good bit of jewellery, he'd offer a small price, give Tommy a drink, and a deal was soon effected, though occasionally the jewellery proved trash. In addition to the amateurs mentioned above, Mr. Henry Hudson showed himself to be a cool and collected rider. He too, like Mr. Vincent, is nowadays well represented by his son Harry, Manager of the Bicanpore indigo concern. Both Glass and Harry are true chips of the old block, straight and good sportsmen. At the lotteries overnight, it was found that the Civilians' Cup was likely to be a repetition of the Doomraon one, Helen and Meg pitted once more against each other, the field being filled by a handsome Arab of Mr. McLeod's, called Egypt. Meg was made a warm favorite, chiefly because the glamour of her victory the first day, over-powered the judgment of the public, and also because as they knew Abdool was to be up on Helen, they argued he would ride no better than before; but Mr. Vincent stuck staunchly to his filly, and backed her down to even money, laying two to one on her after her preliminary canter on the course in the morning, and the result showed how fully his confidence was justified, for Abdool, keeping cool this time, and strictly obeying orders, never left Meg's side till a quarter of a mile from home, and then dropping his hands, he sailed in an easy winner, the cheering almost bringing the roof down. But a better country-bred of Mr. Vincent's was Schamyl, whom he sold to Charley Smith's father, old "Smith of Asia," a queer old card. Schamyl cleared the board for two years afterwards at the upcountry meetings.

The next race on the card was a mile welter race, gentlemen jocks only, Mr. Wallace's Rejected, beat Annette and Hero. The winner was steered by that accomplished Lower Bengal horseman, Mr. Stocks, the silk planter, who came all the way from Berhampore, to show the Behar boys, they were not the best in the land of Ind. Then came a hack sweepstakes, bringing out Edward Morgan, whom Simmy had now promoted to knighthood, ridden by his eccentric owner in first rate form, he got home a short head in front of Nell Gwynne, after one of the gamest struggles ever seen at Sonepore. To finish the day, a half mile scurry for untrained hacks was improvised, and again Simmy steered the winner, Alice, Mr. Lambert on Maggie Lauder second, both riders doing all they knew, and a neck only dividing the horses. The third day opened with a thirty gold mohur, round the course race, for all horses, won by the Confederate's Australian mare Beeswing, who beat Legerdemain easily, the cranky Diana after fighting as usual till she got into the straight, then showed her turn of foot by nearly catching the leaders. Mr. Stocks again scored in the mile and a half welter, winning on Rejected, who had been bought by Mr. Jorrocks, a festive name under which Simmy was now running, from the local G.R.'s Lord Ulick and Fraser McDonell. Then, elated with victory, Simmy was silly enough to send out his game little pony Indigo, only standing 13-1½, to run against Fraser McDonell's big Arab Beppo, with the inevitable result of a farce. The closing event, a Galloway Stakes, in which Indigo might have had a chance, was won by half a length by an undersized stud-bred filly, bred at Barrh called Vesta, ridden by Simmy, Fraser McDonell making a good fight on Chocolate, and Jack Lambert whipping in on Diamond, who might, if he'd not played the fool at the start, have had a good look in at the finish. Chocolate was afterwards sold to Henry Hudson. Unfortunately, much interest in the racing was lost, owing to the crack countrybred Grace Lee having gone

wrong just before the meeting, hard luck on Mr. Wallace, she put her hip out when cantering on the course. Macgiveran was Wallace's Jockey in those days, he had come out as a missionary but finding the Mild Hindoo averse to conversion he turned to a more lucrative life on the turf.

A good day was looked forward to on Thursday, and so it proved; old Beeswing making the running from flag fall to winning post, easily beat Meg Merrillies and Chancery; and then came an upset for Rajah Modernarain's Cup, a round the course handicap. Helen and Rejected were about equal favourites, no one fancying Diana, but this time the latter had a strong man on her back, and one with whom moreover she seemed to go kindly, and for the first time she justified her owner's confidence, for making a waiting race up to the ball room, Curran came with a Chifney rush, and beat Helen by a short head. A mile and a quarter race for maidens fell to Hero easily enough, and then came the Planters' Purse, a mile to be run in heats, the only two starters were Mr. McLeod's Arab Egypt 8-7, and the Confederates' old Waler Boomerang 10-4. The first heat proved a better race than was anticipated, for the pair ran locked together to the quarter mile post, Boomerang having about a neck advantage, but from then the Arab gradually closed up, and nose to nose they raced past the judge's box, verdict a dead heat. Mr. Vincent, mercifully withdrew Boomerang for the run-off, as he was obviously unfit, so the Arab walked over. A pony race finished the day, the Confederates' Jenab-i-alle, bought out of an Ekka, beating seven others; and then what a time there was in the planters' camp at breakfast, when they toasted old Kenneth and his mare, and how Scotia's whiskey did flow. Jenab-i-alle was christened after old Jenab Davies who is coming out this year with crores of rupees to lend to distressed Rajahs at nominal interest. The fifth day opened with the two-mile Winners' Handicap, which was somewhat marred by the scratching of Beeswing

who had been allotted top weight. The race was spoilt by a wretched start, of which Rejected got far the best, stealing fully forty lengths, Legerdemain next, followed by Helen, Diana a long way last. Abdool had been told to wait on Diana, but finding Rejected so far in front, lost his head and hustled his mare to pieces; half a mile from home Rejected was a couple of hundred yards ahead of the rest; Diana second, but now Curran sitting very still, and riding beautifully, brought up the English mare, and a few strides from the judge's box, passed Rejected (who shut up like a knife) and won easily by three lengths; another jubilee for the planters. It was after this race that Mr. McLeod bought Curran's discharge from the 1st Fusiliers, and gave him permanent employment. The Losers' Free Handicap, R.C., was uninteresting, only Annette and Firefly running; the former won easily. The Hack Handicap was a good race, five started, but Simmy brought Sir Edward Morgan home easily, although carrying top weight. The Consolation Stakes fell to Hero, and this ought to have ended the meeting; but the fair sex said otherwise, and wanted another ball. Of course they had their way, and of course racing had to be got up to pass the time during the day. The bachelors offered a thirty-two goldmohur purse, a handicap for all horses, which the improving Diana won. The ladies, not to be outdone by the bachelors, offered a purse for a three-quarter mile race, eleven stone each, Diana and Rejected coming out again, the former ridden by Herewald Wake spoilt her chance by trying to get off the course early in the race, and Mr. Stocks on Rejected, beat Mr. Simson on Sir Edward Morgan, and Mr. McDonell on Beppo, and Mr. Lambert on Hero, and Jenab, each won a hack, and pony race, and this ended the meeting of 1855. Rifle shooting competitions had been got up this year to add to the fun, and one of the best shots present was Justin Finch, father of *The Fabberwock* and poor Jeffery.

CHAPTER IX.

YEAR 1856.

And now we come to 1856, the best Sonepore, which had been seen for some years, Mr. Fraser McDonell still running the show. A goodly gathering of sportsmen and their lady friends assembled early in November; Lord Ulick Browne, a scion of the well-known Sligo family, and who had resuscitated Mozufferpore, was now one of the Confederates, and with Messrs. Lambert, McDonell, Simson, Vincent, Latour and several others, represented the local officials. Messrs. McLeod, Wallace, Fraser, Major Holmes (Mr. Irregular) and Captains Cooper, and O'Callaghan, were among the owners. Mr. Stocks was up again from Berhampore, Sir Charles Oakley running under the name of Mr. Catapult; Colonel Apperley from Pusa, and Captain Monty Turnbull, who had married Colonel Apperley's sister, were there too. Mrs. Turnbull was one of the most accomplished horse-women I have ever seen grace a saddle, she accompanied her gallant husband in his famous ride from Umballa to Shikarpore during the Mutiny, and earned for herself the name of the Star of the Desert. Monty in partnership with Lord Ulick, and Colonel Nassau Lees, shortly after the Mutiny, brought out the *Oriental Sporting Magazine* and co-edited it with the above gentlemen till he retired in 1875. He owned the great Hermit, and several other lovely Arabs. On the first day three only came out for the Derby, two of them being Mr. McLeod's, the other Lucks All, hailing from the Monghyr stable. Chancery was a hot favourite, but to everyone's astonishment he did not have it by any means his own way, as the three jockeys, Curran, Folkes, and Irving, fought out a magnificent contest, Chancery only winning by half a head, a head dividing Gauntiet from Lucks All. The course was very heavy going, owing to late rains. Now came the Irregular Cup, presented by Major Holmes, for all Colonial and

countrybred maidens, R. C., Mr. McLeod scoring an easy win with the Cape horse Roebuck ; King Coil, a C.-B. colt of Mr. Wallace's, started favourite, but finished last. The Bettiah Cup brought out only two, Diana, and the vaunted Babylonian, Mr. McLeod's luck was well in, and his mare going kindly, beat the favourite. For the last race for Hacks, G.R's only, six started, and Simmy won on an unnamed black filly. In this race Alec Urquhart, a son of the hospitable opium agent of Mozufferpore, donned silk, and came in third on Penelope. Saturday opened with Mr. McLeod's walking over with Roebuck, for Rajah Modernarain's Cup. The second event was a mile, G.R's only. The day before, Simmy had bought the old Australian Boomerang from Lord Ulick and he was made a hot favourite for this race, but Mr. McLeod's grey maiden Arab Chancery, with Henry Hudson up, made all the running and won cleverly. The Monghyr Cup, presented by Mr. Wallace, only brought out the half sisters Helen, and Grace Lee, and with the course in such a heavy state, however a sensible man like Mr. Vincent could have backed his little one against the giantess, seems wonderful, but it's the right sort of infatuation after all, for a straight sportsman to believe in his gee's ability to lick creation. Grace won comfortably. Last race on the card was a hack race, which might have been a good one with a decent start, but Bill Pratt riding Jack Becher's Hero, and Herewald Wake on Nell Gwynne, got a dozen lengths the best of it, Simmy on Edward Morgan losing fifty lengths, Hero just got home. A poor day's racing. There was a good deal of discussion at Monday's lotteries, over the relative merits of the English and Cape horses *versus* the countrybreds. In the Civilians' Cup Mr. McLeod was running both Diana and Roebuck, and declared to win with the latter. Helen was rightly considered to have no chance, but many looked to see the champion countrybred beat the Chupra pair, unfortunate-

ly she broke down half a mile from home, and then Curran and Barker fought out a desperate and unnecessary finish, the result a dead heat. Of course a walk over with Roebuck settled matters, but either Mr. McLeod must have forgotten to tell the jockeys of his declaration to win with the Cape, or he should have carpeted Curran for running the risk of breaking down his horse for no benefit to public, owner, or himself; perhaps Curran had had a wee drappie. The Welter brought out Mr. Wallace's Legerdemain ridden by Mr. Stocks, a new Cape horse called Cossack of Mr. McLeod's, and the ever ready to fill a race Mr. Simmy weighed in with Boomerang, but the Lower Bengal planter once more bested yung Tirhoot, and Legerdemain won by three lengths cantering. A race for Arab hacks was won by Simmy, on Mr. Pilgrim's Jacob Faithful, after a really good race with Mr. Fraser McDonell on Rector, a game Arab, the property of Frank Vincent, who had bought him from Colonel Blood of Bombay, the Colonel gave Rs. 2,500 for him. As an untried four-year-old, he won the Lahore Derby, and several other races, but became such a confirmed puller that he was sold, and bought by Mr. Vincent for Rs. 700, he won the ten mile race at Sonapore, and several others for his new owner. Eventually Rector became the property of an officer named Wyld, nicknamed "Jonathan" Wyld, of the 40th N. I., and during the Mutiny bolted right into the enemies' ranks while charging, his rider finding he could not pull him up, drew his revolver, shot the horse, and flung himself off, unhurt; Rector's after fate is unknown. Little interest was evinced over the Galloway race, only a pony of Simmy's daring to try conclusions with the crack Chocolate, on whom Mr. Hudson had an easy win. On the fourth day, the big thing was the Sonapore Cup, and Diana, Helen, and Sir Charles Oakley's Mercury, declared to start. Helen was not fancied at all, but the betting on the English and Australian competitors was very

slightly in favor of the former, little Helen, however, ran gamely, was only beaten a length, and had the ground been hard, instead of heavy, it is quite possible the verdict might have been different, Diana won by half a length, after a grand race. For the Doomraon Cup Helen was started again, Roebuck was made a hot favorite from Legerdemain, but Peter Irving on the latter, bested Curran, and upset the apple cart. Cossack got home for a cup for planters' horses, given by Simmy, who rode Hero for second place, Alec Urquhart whipping in on Penelope. Then came a Hack Handicap, which Simmy won on the old evergreen, Edward Morgan, all the other G.R.'s of the district on the beaten ones. Good handicaps on Friday naturally made speculation brisk at the lotteries. The Winners' Handicap resolved itself into a match between Diana and Legerdemain, at a difference of seventeen pounds, but the mare proved best, and this was her last race in Behar; she went down to Calcutta and broke down when running well up in the Viceroy's Cup. Diana's success at Sonapore, and the praises showered on Curran, proved too much for the lad; filled up with liquor, and feted and fed by pals, and those who had won over the mare, he gradually took to the bottle, so much so that Mr. McLeod had to discharge him. He joined the Yeomanry Cavalry during the Mutiny, and eventually became second whip to the Calcutta hounds, finally he became a stable loafer, and died from what the Baboo Doctor described as "excess of alcohol."

The Losers' Handicap proved a good race between Mr. Wallace's Babylonian, and the Cape filly Moonbeam, the third Boomerang entered by the ever obliging Simmy, Babylonian, with Peter Irving up, only got home from Curran by half a length, which would have undoubtedly been reversed, had Curran not had to declare 7½ lbs. over. Then out came all the hacks again, and the Honorary Secretary got the best of the half dozen starters, and romped home on Juliet.

In this race Nell Gwynne, in spite of Lord Ulick's persuasions refused to start till the rest had gone a quarter of a mile; but she did better in the Consolation Stakes, for going kindly she beat Hero and Hotspur. Although only five days had been advertised, and half the visitors had cleared out on the Saturday, yet the festive planters, elated at local victories, would have another day, and while the dulcet notes of Kenneth McLeod's voice, to the accompaniment of his violin, made the rafters ring to the strains of "Ho Maggie Lauder," or "the Diel take the hindmost says Duncan Macalagan Laird of Tally-ben Jo," they got up a card, and Monday opened with a Bachelors' Purse, a mile and three-quarters handicap, Legerdemain 9-8, Mercury 9-4, and Roebuck 8-12. They got home in the order given, but Mercury was pulling so hard that Folkes' stirrup leather and curb chain broke, and the horse bolted, and ran himself out; another lesson to professional and owner alike, of the necessity of using sound gear. A Ladies' Purse was won by Cossack, Fraser McDonell up, Mr. Stocks, for the first time at Sonepore, occupying a back seat. The meeting finished by Simmy's scoring on Juliet, in a half mile hack race. At this meeting the plunging was abnormal, men who looked on betting as sinful had at least fifty rupees on Diana every time she went out; old Latour, the Collector, won a pot of money on her, Vincent dropped a bit. But Behar had now to face troublous times, and although she escaped comparatively scatheless, it was chiefly because Patna was lucky enough to have, at the moment, a man like William Tayler, bold enough to nip rebellion in the bud; by drastic measures he saved Behar, but for him the massacres would have spread to the indigo districts, yet his reward was contumely and disgrace, because he had a vindictive enemy at head-quarters. In addition to Tayler's prompt action, Fraser McDonell worthily upheld the good name of the grand old school he was educated at, Haileybury,

never was Victoria Cross more worthily won than by William Fraser McDonell at Arrah, but William Tayler should have had it too, for he saved a province, while little Mac only saved individuals. The children of both of them live among us proud of their fathers' fame, and assured that as long as planters are allowed to cultivate the fertile lands of Behar, the memory of their illustrious ancestors' heroic deeds will never be forgotten.

CHAPTER X.

YEARS 1857-58 UP TO 64.

Although Mr. Fraser McDonell issued the usual programme early in 1857, the Mutiny, naturally enough, kept many visitors away, particularly the fair sex, who were conspicuous by their absence. The native fair, however, was held as usual, and was crowded; the officials and a contingent of soldiers from Dinapore were on the spot to prevent any outbreak; the racing resolved itself into a very poor sky affair, Kenneth McLeod winning most of the events; and there was nothing worth chronicling from start to finish, no dances or sports—in fact, the very tamest Sonapore ever known.

In 1857 the *Indian Sporting Review*, the only reliable turf guide up to then, died, chiefly because its Editor, Mr. Hume, tried to turn it into a political paper; naturally the interest its readers took in it fell off, and it was not till 1865 that the resuscitation of the old *Oriental Sporting Magazine* by Mr. W. Gilbert Hickey, gives reliable data to go on. In 1858 the racing at Sonapore was again poor, but in 1859 Mr. Vincent had a strong stable of countrybreds, and with them cleared the board both at Sonapore and Mozufferpore; Schamyl and Helen were simply invincible, though opposed by such good nags as Mercury, Cossack and a

crack Cape horse of Mr. McLeod's. Early in 1859 Lord Ulick left Behar, being transferred to Calcutta. In 1860 Mr. Vincent went home, remaining there for two years, and during that time Mr. Wallace and Kennath McLeod chiefly divided honors at the Behar meetings. Lord Ulick Browne having got married in 1858 had retired from the turf for good, and from the day he faced the altar rails, he never again ran a horse or made a bet, a singular instance of self-denial, for he loved the game dearly; but although a fair race rider, he was never a real master of the art, and his chief victories were on old Boomerang, who knew more about the art of getting home, than his owner did. Lord Ulick was a sportsman in the truest sense of the word, he never rode or ran a horse, but to win, and his delightful innocence to the end of his career was as refreshing as it was amusing to his friends. The soul of honor himself, he could believe evil of no one. Adversary, one of Mr. Wallace's Monghyr bred youngsters, was a great colt in 1861 and 1862, and McGiveran won many a good race on him. He was by Crassus out of Antagonist by Venison and would have proved as consistent a performer as Mr. Campbell's Pretender, but he did not last long, being unsound. At the end of 1862, Mr. Vincent returned to India and took up the appointment of Dacoity Commissioner, having his headquarters at Dinapore and living at Deega Castle, the big house on the bank of the Ganges. He still kept up his stud at Barh. He brought out with him a grand little thoroughbred Irish horse called Curraghmore, who won both the big cups at Sonapore that year and repeated the performance in 1863. He was beaten the first day by a horse of Colonel Robarts, being unfit, but that gallop was just what he wanted and he romped home for the Bettiah and Sonapore Cups both on the same day. Alas! that it should be so, but it is an undoubted fact that the horse was pulled by his jockey in the 'Winners' Handicap, and shame that it should be so, the jockey was

bribed not to win, by a civilian. The night before the race, hearing that an attempt would be made to poison Curraghmore, Mr. Vincent placed a "Nujeeb" guard round the horse's stall, and at two o'clock in the morning they caught a European jockey trying to get into the stable. It was perhaps a pity he did not effect his purpose, as the horse was a man eater and would have certainly savaged a stranger, but a ring had been formed and, though the nobbling overnight failed, the horse was equally successfully stopped in the actual race. There were some rank scamps on the turf in those days, both amongst owners and professionals, and even Sonapore was not free from scoundrelism. Peter was the jockey who rode Curraghmore. Shortly after this regrettable occurrence, Mr. Vincent sold the good and game little horse to Major Goad of Simla, for four thousand rupees, but whether in addition to palpably roping the horse during the race, Peter had drugged the bit, so as to ensure his nefarious ends, will never be known; at any rate, the horse never won another race, and his failure was put down to the usual weakness of English and Irish horses—bad feet; far more likely that poison was so infused into his system, that he went wrong all round. In 1864 Mr. Vincent resigned the service, but still kept up the Barh stud, though residing during the hot weather at Mussoorie, where he built a couple of nice houses, during the winter he used to visit his old hunting grounds at Sonapore and Mozufferpore, and, till his eventual return to England in 1869, always had something good enough to carry his colors to the front. Behar owed much to him as a valuable official, a straight racing man and an enthusiastic breeder of throughbreds. It was at the meeting of 1863 that Mr. Jimmy McLeod first made his appearance as a G.R. and he rode a C.B. mare of his own called Gentle Annie, second to the well-known Arab Selim. Old stagers knowing that Jimmy had little or no experience as a race rider, despised the performance, but seeing how well the mare had run, advised him to put

up a professional the next day, and Jimmy, thinking this sound, made a match, Gentle Annie to get seven pounds from Selim, he put up the best jockey in the country, but the mare was beaten worse than when he had steered her himself. Little did those sportsmen think that the young Highlander would turn out, before many years had passed, to be one of the strongest and best riders that we have ever been able to boast of in India, and who across country proved almost invincible. Mr. Gough and Dr. Sawyers were breeding some capital country-breds during those years at Patna, and the studs of Mr. Wallace at Monghyr, and Mr. Vincent at Barh, were in full swing, but the latter made a grave error, when Crassus was worn out as a sire, by importing the Irish Birdcatcher, almost every one of whose foals turned out a useless peacock. Sonapore racing was principally kept up from 58 to 64 by the above-named gentlemen, Colonel Robarts, Lord Ulick Browne, Kenneth McLeod, and H. B. Simon; shortly afterwards the brothers Freeman, then part owners of Lall Serryah, seeing the pull they had, in having such a rider as young Jimmy McLeod, began to develop a taste for racing, and gradually the Lall Serryah stable rose to be the best in all Behar. But it was to Lord Ulick Browne the district owed most. Against mighty odds, he not only resuscitated racing at Mozufferpore, but never let it flag till he was transferred to another province; he left India the virtual head of the Calcutta Turf Club, loved and respected by every true lover of honest sport, a straight and true Irish nobleman. Colonel Robarts was a funny tempered, peppery old fellow, and about this time owned a chesnut Australian nag called Linton, who could win almost any race, if he chose, but, like his owner, he had a will of his own, and he generally bucked his rider off when going to the post, and then took an excursion into the country. The Colonel used to go to the starting post, armed with a hunting whip, and his son, poor

Abdool Ghyas, who rode the brute, used to complain bitterly of the old gentleman's behaviour; he said he didn't mind the cuts from the whip, which as often reached him as the horse; nor the frequent spills, but it was the fluent native abuse fired at him, to which he objected. Henry Hudson bought Chocolate, and many a good race he used to fight out in these years with Simmy on Indigo, and Frank Vincent on Diamond. Ned Urquhart was no mean rider, nor was his brother Alec; in fact Behar could boast then of at least a dozen really good men, second to none of whom was Paddy Hudson, though he had had the advantage of having ridden from childhood, which many of the others had not; at a finish he was the master of them all. One of the most amusing sights at Sonapore in the fifties and sixties, used to be old Mr. Kenneth McLeod. Never was ancient border chieftain a greater stickler for dignity, than was the indigo king of Sarun. He used to strut about dressed in full Highland toggery, looking at his horses, and surrounded by a mob of sycophantic satellites. The Laird of Cockpen wasn't in it with him, but though a little tin god in Chupra, the Chumparun boys cared not a jot for his airs, and only laughed at his harmless vanities. One day on the Chupra race-course, a youngster, one of our most promising G. R's., got up to ride a sulky, hard-mouthed brute called Bob, in a race in which Kenneth had entered a moderate enough nag called Exshaw-No.-1, the old man asked the youth what chance he thought Bob had. "Well," was the answer, "I doubt if I shall keep the brute on the course, but if I do I shall be near winning." As it happened Bob was in a good humour kept, straight, and won, though he swerved round and bolted through the opening, when still going full split, just after passing the winning post. As the rider brought Bob back into the paddock, the Laird said to him in a most dignified but reprehensive tone, "I thought you said young man you couldn't keep that horse on the course." "I never thought

I should have been able to do so," was the quiet reply. But the arrogance of the Laird was too much for Paddy Hudson, who was standing by, and he blurted out, "I'll bet you a gold mohur McLeod, no one else here will ride Bob round the course, I'll bet you five gold mohurs no one will gallop him round the course, and I'll bet you twenty gold mohurs *you* won't walk that horse round the course." The great man shut up instantler and walked off considerably riled. Dozens of tales could be told of Paddy's trite sayings; who that heard it, will ever forget the way he, years after this, chaffed Stanley Collier, the Civilian, at one of the balls. Collier had just come up to Behar for the first time, as Joint Magistrate of Mozufferpore, and even then, gave strangers the idea that he fancied himself immensely, and in dancing he held his head very stiffly, and with nose high in the air was careering round, absolutely ignorant of the intense delight with which his gyrations were watched by a lot of wall flowers, of whom Paddy was one. Unfortunately he pulled up just by the irrepressible Irishman, who marched up to him and said, "I say Martingale." "My name is Collier, Sir, not Martingale," was the indignant rejoinder. "Is it indeed, but you badly want a Martingale all the same" was the unabashed reply. Of course everyone exploded with laughter, and Collier speechless with rage stalked indignantly away. Collier meant well, though, and his manner was almost entirely due to shyness. The Sonapore mute conjuror, had Paddy beautifully once. At the races he came up to Paddy, and motioned to him that he wanted to know the time, Paddy, put his hand to his pocket to pull out his watch, but found it *non est*. "By jove, I had it all right a couple of minutes ago," he exclaimed. The conjuror pointed to Paddy's tent, off ran Paddy, and found watch and chain reposing on his dressing table.

CHAPTER XI.

YEAR 1865.

The year 1865 is best described as the Soldiers' Year, for they turned up in swarms, and were in evidence everywhere. Messrs. Collins, Vincent, Urquhart and Freeman being the only civilians opposing them. Messrs. Collins and Rimmer had a strong stable, and they won most of the big events. Colonel Robarts and his handsome eldest son, Abdool Ghyas, whose mother was an Afghan lady, was as usual present. Mr. Dunbar, under which name the redoubtable Ned Urquhart ran, was represented by two or three horses, but his proverbial luck did not stand him in stead that year, for he won nothing; he had Pixie, an exceedingly fast sprinter, whose distance was five furlongs, but unfortunately the average distance of the races of those days, was a mile and a half, so a sprinter was comparatively useless, save as a pacemaker. Smith of Asia was there in full fig, he was running as Captain Charles, and had the English mare Morning Star, and the Australian Whalebone—both distinguished themselves; a very fine command of language had the gentle Smith, it was a treat to listen to him blessing his syces. Colonel Twysden, a very fine horseman, and Captains Cunningham, and George, from the North-West brought down their horses, and ran them pluckily, though the company was too good for them, and they did not score a single winning bracket. Most unfortunately one of Captain Cunningham's horses died while the meet was in progress, and he was convinced it had been poisoned, but a *post mortem* conclusively proved natural causes only. The meeting fell early in the year, the 31st October being the first day. Events opened by Mr. Collins winning the Leger with Dirk Hatterick, his other string Amsterdam, being second, Marmion of Colonel Robarts', Vernon, and Woodman of Captain Cunningham's following them. Then again the same stable

carried off the Chumparun Cup, with the mighty Vanderdecken, and again Colonel Robarts had to be content with second honors, his colors being carried by Challenger; Captain Cunningham ran third with Bellona, steered by Joseph, 7st. 8lbs. Who of those who saw the portly trainer Joseph, some years later, leading in the invincible Bendigo time after time, on English race courses, would have thought he could ever have scaled so light. Harry Abbott once rode against him, saddle and all 6st. 4lbs., Joseph carrying 7st. 6lbs. *Toujours* Messrs. Collins and Rimmer, for the third race, the Durbangah Cup for maiden C.B.'s and Arabs, fell to their fine chesnut Arab Sultan, Joseph up, the Lall Serryah C.B. mare Matchless second, Messrs. Cunningham, and Urquhart's nags Snowdrop and Dolarie whipping in. The fourth race fell through, and a match between Mr. Howard's Mary Williamson, and Lawrence Crowdy's Laughton Woods, resulted in a win for the former. The second day again began with a win of the Hutwa Cup for Messrs. Collins and Rimmer's Dirk Hatterick, Van second. They had declared to win with the former. The Planters' Purse gave Captain Smith a bracket, Whalebone, with a native up, beating Captain Cunningham's Adelaide, who was steered by Joseph; Mr. Vincent's Mabel was third. Captain Bishop pulled off the Galloway Stakes, with a nice little Arab, Pickle, and that ended the day. Van easily disposed of Rocket, Challenger, Morning Star and Blink Bonny in the Civilians' Cup, and Whalebone put the Visitors' Plate to the credit of Smith of Asia. Nothing but scratch races for the rest of the day. The fourth day showed better racing and bigger fields. Vanderdecken won the Sonapore Cup, beating Rocket; Morning Star declared to start, but paid forfeit, as she was to run in the next race, the Doomraon Cup, which she won easily, beating Vanderdecken, who was conceding her a stone. Blink Bonny won the Welter, beating Walebone, Cobweb, Rocket, and Pixie. At last the

planters scored a win, for Verdant Green, now Mr. Freeman's property, got home for the Hajespore Stakes, and Jimmy McLeod followed up the stable luck, by winning a match for ten gold mohurs, riding his own country-bred pony Sam Slick, for which he had paid fifty rupees, against one of "Bricky," Collins' called Little Van, who was steered by Auckland. Jimmy was giving Van a stone, and wanted to risk only five gold mohurs, but "Bricky" said "No, why its honly ha harm full of hindigo for you, and a cart load of bricks for me." On the last day Messrs. Collins and Rimmer's Elvira won the Losers' handicap, after a good race, beating Gentle Annie, Amsterdam, Adelaide, Bonnie Morn, and Challenger. Smith of Asia collared the Ticaree Cup with Morning Star. Collins bought her after this but had no luck with her, and she died from some internal complaint. Colonel Robarts had a look in at last, getting the second class handicap with Rockwood, and that finished the racing for the year. Taking it all in all a very good meeting. A fine lot of professionals were present—Joseph, Arnot, Woods, Chapman, McGiveran, Williamson, Hackney, Jaffir, Abdool and Choochoo, all above the average as horsemen. Nearly all are dead now, I think; Hackney became very religious in his latter days, very sincere, he was much respected by all who knew him, for there was no humbug about his piety.

CHAPTER XII.

YEAR 1866.

For 1866 the Stewards were Messrs. Collingridge, Abercrombie, Richardson, and Fraser McDonell, with Teddy Drummond, then Judge of Bankipore, as Secretary. The entries had been fairly promising "Bricky" Collins, Colonel Robarts, and Messrs. Blacker, Major Windham, Morgan and Captain Cunningham were the principal outside owners,

Mr. Freeman being the chief local one. It was at this meeting, which opened on the 13th November, that for the first time an objection was raised to the gold mohur tickets which up to then had been the rule. Mr. Drummond at the first ordinary put the question to the vote, and, after a good deal of discussion, it was held that those wanting the change were in the majority. The innovation was sensible, for in the excitement of bidding, owners found it naturally easier to calculate odds with ten rupees tickets. For the St. Leger, five were declared to start, Jack Sheppard, Debenture, Medora, Monarch of the Glen and Milliner. Mr. Blacker's Debenture was made favourite, selling for Rs. 380, Medora the only other fancied. Then came a lottery on the Bettiah Cup for which Morning Star, a lovely English mare, the property of "Bricky" Collins, would alone go down with the public, her only opponents being her stable-companion Vanderdecken, with Rockwood, and Silver Star. "Bricky" bought her all to his own cheek for Rs. 260, and would give nothing away. For the Durbangah Cup, Buckleg and Abdalla were about equally fancied. Mr. Blacker like "Bricky" had full confidence in his horse Buckleg and would not let the public have him. On the course in the morning the band of the 105th Regiment discoursed sweet music, having followed up the pestilential gun, by coaxing the lie-a-beds out of their beauty sleep with "Slap bang here we are again." A big durbar which was being held up-country by Sir John Lawrence, then Governor-General of India, kept away a good many army men, but nevertheless the stand was very full, Colonel Robarts and his fine half Afghan sons. Dr. Rimmer, and "Bricky" Collins now racing apart, being very much in evidence. Debenture opened the ball, by scoring an easy win in the Leger for Mr. Blacker. Again the favourite scored in the Bettiah Cup, Morning Star with Dignam up, winning from Rockwood who carried the native boy Choochoo; the long professional had by no means an easy task to get home. Mr. Collins had

declared to win with the mare, though his other string, the great Van, was of course the better ; but at one time it looked as if Hackney would have to bring up the champion, as Choochoo at the distance post brought up Rockwood with a rattle, and Dignam's whip hand went up as a danger signal, but his mount lasted out, and got home by half a length. Mr. Blacker's luck was in, for Buckleg with Tingey up, won the Durbangah Cup as he liked ; never headed, he simply romped home. The last race, the Moorcroft Stakes, a three-quarter mile selling race, fell to Mr. Collins' Zuyder Zee after a good race with Mr. Major's Violet, who overpowered her jockey, and ran herself to a stand still ; Zuyder Zee was put up for sale, entered at Rs. 700, Mr. Major ran him up to, and bought him for Rs. 1,075. Mr. Major was old Major "Buxie" Brown of Dinapore, he was paymaster there for years, he bred Verdant Green himself, he also bred some fine half English cattle there and did a lot of good in that way. At the second night's ordinary the first lottery was on the Hutwa Cup, Morning Star, Vanderdecken, Rockwood and Kate being the only starters, this time "Bricky" declared to win with Van, but had to pay Rs. 620 for him, much to the delight of the lucky ticket holder ; the rest went for an average of thirty rupees. For the Planters' Purse, Blink Bonny, Amsterdam, Verdant Green, Coupon, and Pixie were declared ; Amsterdam, the property of Dr. Rimmer, a hot favourite, bringing Rs. 410, Blink Bonny Rs. 190, Pixie Rs. 140, Coupon Rs. 70 and Verdant Green Rs. 20, the favourites were both bought by the same gentleman, Dr. Rimmer, the owner of Amsterdam buying the Verdant one. These were the only lotteries held, as there were only three starters for the Gallo-way Stakes, and the small fry hack owners did not want to gambol over their mokes' chances, so all got early to bed or, rather, to supper. Vanderdecken won the Hutwah Cup in a trot, there being no excitement over the race, but very much more interest was evinced over the Planters' Purse,

for it leaked out during the morning, that it was not unlikely the great Amsterdam would be beaten by a dead outsider. Pixie a weak backed, but speedy chesnut Australian, made running for half a mile, Amsterdam held in a nice position by Dignam, but here Verdant Green shot to the front and won easily; though, Dignam gave Amsterdam a terrible grueling in his endeavours to get home. Colonel Robarts' handsome little bay Milkmaid, romped home for the Galloway Stakes, and then the lucky Mr. Major's Monarch of the Glen won the Hack Stakes, villainously ridden; Mr. Freeman's Marchioness, with Jimmy McLeod up, second. For the third day's racing, Vanderdecken frightened away everything but Rockwood and Silver Star, from the Civilians' Cup and he brought Rs. 640 in an eight hundred rupee lottery. A poor field, too, declared for the Visitors' Purse, but the lottery was a good one for ticket takers; Blink Bonny brought Rs. 300, Amsterdam Rs. 500 and Challenger Rs. 270, tickets, Rs. 980. Dr. Rimmer and Bumph Freeman had now gone into a confederacy, and they declared to win with Blink Bonny, so their only opponent was Colonel Robarts' Challenger. Three declared to start for the 20 G. M. Stakes—Buckleg, Abdallah and Prince Alfred, the latter was installed a hot favourite and went for Rs. 500, the others only realising, Rs. 50 and Rs. 20. Van won the Civilians' Cup hard held, but the talent got a nasty knock in the Visitors' Plate, and the confederates stood aghast on seeing the issue, when Choochoo on Challenger fairly and squarely outrode Hackney on Amsterdam. Mr. Collins' Prince Alfred justified his owner's confidence by winning the two mile Arab race in a walk; and then Jimmy McLeod finished up the day by winning the pony race on his own Sam Slick, beating the crack professional Hackney, on Mr. Collins' Little Van, a creditable performance for a comparative beginner, for Hackney was a fine rider. Still poorer were the lotteries for the fourth day's racing, only two filling, due chiefly to the falling through of the Sonapore

Cup, one filled on the Doomraon Cup, for which Morning Star, Dirk Hatterick, Rockwood, Silver Star, and Kate accepted; it being virtually a duel between the rival stables of Messrs. Collins and Manchester, the former's stable was run up to Rs. 600, but Brickly stood by his nags pluckily. Then there was a lottery on the Welter, five starters, Prince Alfred was favorite. The day opened with the Hajeepore Stakes, only Van, and Debenture, going out; and again the fiddle-headed old buggy nag had it all his own way. Then came the Doomraon Cup, which Morning Star won easily for Mr. Collins; there was a good deal of grumbling over this handicap, the other owners thinking Dirk Hatterick chucked in, but he ran a rank cur and finished in the ruck. Colonel Roberts, too, was very angry at game and consistent little Rockwood's impost of 8st. The Welter was an upset, for Mr. Major's new purchase, Zuyder Zee, who had sold for Rs. 90, won easily from Challenger. Five stripped for the Hajeepore Stakes, which Dr. Rimmer's Amsterdam won, never being headed, and so ended the fourth day. The poor acceptances for the principal races made punters shy, and again only a couple of lotteries filled; both on the second class handicap, Dirk Hatterick favorite in both, fetching Rs. 290 in one of Rs. 750, and Rs. 300 in the second. Again owners were dissatisfied with the handicaps, the chief cry being from the owners of the worst horses, who wanted crushing weights put on the good animals, which the Stewards were far too sporting to do; for they started both the big handicaps at the fair racing weight of 9st. 10lbs. In the Ticcree Cup, they went in all conscience far enough, when they allotted Morning Star 11st. 4lbs; but even then there were howls, verily a handicapper's life is not a happy one! Only two came to the post for the Losers' Handicap, Colonel Roberts' Rockwood, conceding Mr. Freeman's Blink Bonny 1st. 5lbs., the former won from pillar to post. Then the mighty Van, the only acceptor out of the five handicapped for the Ticcree Cup, walk-

ed over for it, after which the crowd of grumblers turned to watch the second class handicap, a gift, as they fancied, for Dirk Hatterick. How the owners had snarled at each other on seeing the weights. Colonel Robarts said Dirk had been chucked in; Bricky urbanely replied that he felt blooming certain he had, but the winner turned up in Silver Star, and Bricky stuck his tongue in his cheek, as he led Dirk who had finished in the ruck, past the Colonel; Zuyder Zee was a good second. The meeting wound up with a selling race, which Doctor Rimmer's Blink Bonny pulled off. The racing, taken as a whole, was poor, as Mr. Collins' stable was too strong for the rest; but still good horses had competed, and the pity was that old Van so far outclassed the rest. Mr. Major did well with Zuyder Zee, and why the big stables did not buy the horse in after the first selling race, was a puzzle to the majority. He was bought for a thousand, but after the meeting the astute Mr. Major parted with him for Rs. 3,000 and half winnings at the coming Calcutta races, his old owner Mr. Collins, being the buyer. The fair was a small one, and the show of horses poor in the extreme, yet a lot of very heavy shouldered coarse specimens of Caboolis, fetched a good deal more than the usual figures for such cattle, on account of a lot of Calcutta dealers having come up, and the competition being, in consequence, keen. There was a good show of cows, and bullocks, but very few elephants, due to the Durbar forming a greater attraction. This was the year when the great Agra Bank went smash, crippling many of the local indigo planters. The course was in execrable order, full of rat holes, Mr. Mitford's Mirage broke its fetlock in one, when exercising, and had to be shot. This was the year in which Mr. Edward Studd, senior, won the Grand National, at Liverpool, with Salamander. Some funny stories used to be told of old Buxie Brown's essays at training. He had a firm conviction of the efficacy of homœopathy.

and used to fill his unfortunate animals up with drugs, Once Dr. Rimmer gave him his horses to train, while he was away, and he gave the whole lot rheumatism, by chucking cold water over them when they came in hot from their gallops.

It was at this meeting that Mr. Gilbert Nicolay first donned silk, he had come out to indigo the year before, at the early age of nineteen, a pretty blue-eyed, fair-haired, slim youngster, with undeniably good hands, and pluck, he was the beau ideal of a race rider, and in a very few years he turned out one of the most accomplished horsemen in Chumparun, and could hold his own, not only with the best G.R's. in the country, but with professionals too. A true gentleman in every sense of the word, Gilbert would not have pulled a horse to save his soul. He had a brother nicknamed The Emperor, an equally good fellow who would probably, had he lived, have turned out quite as good a rider as Gilbert, but unfortunately he could not stand the climate, and died a short time after he came out.

Mr. Vincent went for two years furlough at the end of 1866 and during his absence Sir Seymour Blane was racing under his name.

Those who witnessed it will never forget the awful accident which occurred at Sonapore in 1866 and ended the career of as promising a young soldier as ever wore Her Majesty's uniform. Poor young Boileau of the 17th B.C. was bolted with by a mad half-bred Australian brute, called Alfred, belonging to Jack Becher; unable to pull him up, he was carried into the trees, behind the stables, and in endeavouring to avoid one branch, his head came crash against another, and the skull was simply smashed beyond recognition. The regiment was under orders for Bhootan, but Boileau had come to say farewell to his many friends. This sad event cast a terrible gloom over the meeting. Alfred ended his days as a dog-cart nag of Harry Abbott's.

CHAPTER XIII.

YEAR 1867.

About a month before the meeting of 1867 took place, the Secretary found that the mango tope in which the tents are pitched, and the course, were under 18 inches of water, owing to the Gunduck inundations. Without seeking the assistance of the district authorities, he had the bunds cut, and though the rains lasted unusually long, the ground dried by the commencement of the cold weather, and though the camping ground was, of course, damper than usual, it was quite dry enough for security from malaria. The course was, at the commencement of the meeting, decidedly heavy between the half and quarter mile posts, but after the first two days it was good going enough.

It was satisfactory to find that the untoward season was not likely to affect the meeting, as Monday, the 4th of November, saw the usual succession of visitors, carts, and coolies, trooping in, although some sportsmen could not get away from their occupations till the last moment, and this circumstance diminished the attendance at the first night's lotteries.

There were a good many stables, large and small, to contend for the handsome cups, and other stakes, but accidents and misfortunes had affected the prospects of some materially. Mr. Collins had lost Morning Star, and Vanderdecken had engagements at Hyderabad. The death of Dr. Rimmer, would have disqualified all his nominations, under English racing law, but under a Calcutta Turf Club rule, Mr. Freeman was allowed to take up the nominations, and would have run the horses, but they unfortunately all got rheumatism, owing to Buxie Brown's treatment. Mr. Blacker, the Calcutta merchant, had a good stable, but not only had he lost Hammond, his trainer, who brought out Debenture in such good form the previous year, but all his horses were in very backward condition, chiefly because the shape of the Bangalore

course on which they were trained, did not allow of real galloping for horses with any stride, and because the Sonepore course was not fit for use till so late. Colonel Robarts had a fine string of horses, Rocket looking very well, considering the hard work he had done during the last year. Sir Seymour Blane, Messrs. Milford, Wheal, Major Brown and Mr. Howard made up the list of candidates for Sonepore honors.

At the first Ordinary, the moderate attendance affected the lotteries, which were decidedly mild, though five horses were declared to start for each of the three first races on the following morning. Lotteries at Sonepore were again carried on with ten rupee tickets.

The races commenced on Tuesday, 5th November, with the Sonepore St. Leger, for all maidens. As neither Red Lancer, nor Knight of Avenel, were in a state to run well, while Orphan, and Venture, were facing company rather too good for them at the weights, it looked like Lombard Street to a China orange, on Favourite, after her performances at Mysore, especially as she was in excellent condition, and, with boozy old George Gooch on her back, she romped home. First blood for the Colonel. He followed up his luck, by winning the Bettiah Cup, with Rocket, and then Mr. Collins had a look in, collaring the Durbhangah Cup with his stud-bred rejection Eruption. Mr. Blacker's Dauntless, a bad-tempered brute, must have ruptured something internally, in this race, for on returning to his stable, he laid down and died. Venture won the Moorcroft Stakes. On the second day, the Colonel's stable had another outing, for he won the Hutwa Cup with Rocket, and the Derby with Diamond. On the third he walked over, with Rocket, for the Civilians' Cup, and Bricky Collins won two events, the Arab Handicap with Prince Alfred, and a pony race with Little Van. Jimmy McLeod won the Hack Race on his own nag Lord of the Isles. Prince Alfred was a beautiful Cape horse, but when he

had done racing, old Bricky gave him to his assistant, a man named Pelman, and he finished his career in a buggy at Cawnpore. On the fourth day, three of the four events fell to Colonel Robarts, Jimmy steering Bellona for him in the Welter, and Venture won the Hajeepore Stakes for Mr. Major. On the last day, Seymour Blane had a major share of the sugar, for he won the Ticcaree Cup with his grey Arab Caliph, and a horse handicap with his Australian Nancy, afterwards known as the flying mare. Lowe rode Caliph, who was only a galloway; half a mile from home he seemed beaten, but got his second wind, and, recommencing pulling, won from War Eagle, ridden by Dignam, half a length only being the verdict; Diamond, Gooch up, third. Joseph was riding as light as 8st. 7lbs. at this meeting. All were glad to see that good sportsman Colonel Robarts do so well, and also Sir Seymour Blane and Mr. Collins.

One of the chief events of the meeting was a Fancy Fair, held to raise funds for the improvement of the stand and ball room. There was at first an idea of rebuilding altogether, but the expense put this out of the question; nor was it necessary, as all that was required was a new division wall between the existing rooms and a few new beams. Seats, a complete stock of tables, chairs, chandeliers and other lights, crockery, glass, cutlery, etc., had to be laid in, to save borrowing annually. There was no particular pressure for space on the stand then, as the two small platforms near the winning post were, though always well filled, sufficient.

The Fancy Fair was a great success, and a large sum was realised, of course prices were exorbitant as usual, and there were odds and ends, such as two good sells in the shape of Richardson's show, and a photographic tent, aunt sally, skittles, American bowls, beer taps, etc.

Roses were sold at a rupee each, on condition that they should be placed in the button hole of the purchaser, by the fair seller, but perhaps the most profitable sale of all was that of a bottle of scent which realised in sprinkles on handkerchiefs nearly Rs. 50.

The native fair was an average one, and the usual variety of booths was to be seen. The shops had rather improved during late years, and some of the exhibitions of glass were really good. A brisk business seemed to be done in native wares, and brightly shone the colors in the cap shops where the native *jeunesse dorée* of Behar could ornament their heads to the extreme of fashion.

The horse fair was good as regards weight-carrying Caboolis, but that was all; there were scarcely any decent looking country or stud bred horses, and the show of Rungpore ponies was poor, while there was not a single good hairy Hubshee, a class which used formerly to be well represented at Sonapore. There was, as usual, a diminutive pony; he was nine hands and one inch in height, but not well proportioned. The elephant fair was good, and several fine animals were bought.

On the whole, the meeting was decidedly a good one, and everything went off most pleasantly, without "rows" or disputes about anything. A few points about racing were raised, but the Stewards settled them, and nothing more was said, to the credit of those who raised the questions. There was still the vain effort made to bring Arabs and Australians together. In the Winners' Handicap, Rocket was treated to 12st. the Arab winner getting 6st. 7lbs. The attendance was considerable, though there were one or two camping grounds vacant, and certainly the civilians of Behar did not muster as strongly as usual. The fulminations of the High Court perhaps kept away the Judges, but besides the bench some others were missed who might have been expected as certainties.

It was, I think, at this meeting that the dumb conjuror took a rise out of old Surgeon-Major Thorp. He had managed to get a rupee out of the tightly shut hand of that fine athlete "Barra" McQueen, who had been stroke of his boat at Oxford, when the old Doctor shoving out his leg of mutton fist sung out, "Bedad I'll trouble the haythen to get it out of this," but his face was a caution when on opening his hand, he found the dib gone. "Begorra, the divils in the blackguard," he roared; "turn him out." Dear old Thorp was a beautiful swearer, and hated natives like poison, but his wife lectured him so about it, that he resolved to reform, and when he got in a rage with his bearer, used to shake his fist at him and say, "Oh you frugal swain, you know what I mean." He used, when in charge of the Mozufferpore gaol, to catch all the indecently clad fakeers, who walked through the town, and have them washed and shaved, and then, clothed in a respectable *dhoty*, they would be escorted out of bounds by the police.

One great change struck old visitors forcibly. There was neither a civilians' nor a planters' mess, as in the old days, when all the bachelor administrators joined the former, while the Behar Province seldom turned out fewer than thirty members of the planters' mess, and often a good many more. Old stagers can remember the jolly party of the blues, when sixty have sat down to dinner at their mess. It was remarkable how small the attendance was from Tirhoot. The general management of the indefatigable Secretary was excellent.

CHAPTER XIV.

YEAR 1868.

Early in sixty-eight Teddy Drummond, still Secretary, addressed a round robin to all friends of Sonapore, pointing out that the accommodation, as it then existed, was year by year getting more and more inadequate to hold the ever-increasing visitors, and he appealed for funds to enable him to

enlarge both ball and supper rooms. The proceeds of the Fancy Fair of 1867 amounted to Rs. 3,500, but the sum wanted was twelve thousand. The Maharajahs of Hutwa, Doomraon, Durbangah, and Ticcaree, in addition to their Cups, gave a thousand each, and Benares sent a donation of five hundred. The result was the ball and supper rooms, as they were up to 1895, and well might Teddy Drummond, and his brother Stewards, be congratulated on the fine line of buildings which greeted the eyes of the visitors, as they drove into the favorite top of trees on Monday, the 27th November 1868. The ball room was now an exceedingly roomy and handsome one, and the long corridor and supper room, all that could be desired, the decorations, thanks to the fair ladies who assisted the Secretary, were tasteful? Nearly a week before the races, tents began to rise, stables to be erected, and horses to gallop; sure signs that a bumper meeting might be expected, and the expectations were fully realised, as not an empty camping ground was to be seen on Monday, the day before the races began, whilst the demand for racing stable room, was greater than had been known for years, nor was the quality of the horses in any way inferior to the quantity. The beauty and fashion that not only poured, but rolled in, to grace and enjoy the "Goodwood of India" was worthy of Goodwood itself: and the horses were the "cracks" of India. Those great opponents in former years, Vanderdecken, Rocket, Nancy, Favorite, Bellona and others all arrived, in due order, with a host of minor celebrities; the arrival of some English horses, lately imported, who were now to run for the first time in India, added a fresh interest to the racing. These were May Bell and Adventuress brought out by Mr. Vincent, who returned this year; Sir Seymour Blane was now using Joseph's name to run under.

The first stable to enter an appearance was the Ghazee-pore one under the charge of Joseph. The string consisted

of the famous mare Nancy, Earl King, the two English maidens Maybell and Adventuress, besides Detrimental, and Black Prince, candidates for the Colonials in Calcutta, the Arabs Saladin and Whitehaven, also four country-breds Shamrock, Vonved, War Eagle and Barham, the last two being maidens from the Barh paddocks. Joseph had many difficulties to contend with this year, which prevented all his horses being in as good order as could have been wished; two or three of them, however, looked fit to run for their lives, prominent among them being Earl King, who was this year a big horse. Nancy too, looked well, but she blew so hard in passing the post, each time she had a fast gallop, as to make spectators fancy she was short of work, and hardly fit to compete with the great Van. The two English fillies looked blooming, but were evidently unfit. Indeed, it was publicly said that, owing to the state of the Ghazieepore course, they had not had a gallop till they came to Sonepore, a week before the races, and were merely to be started to get them into condition for Calcutta. Both were much admired as fine specimens of the English thoroughbred race horse. Among the country-breds, Shamrock was the only one in Joseph's string in good order, looking a very different horse to what he was last year; then he was a bag of bones, now he appeared a mass of muscle. The Arab Saladin was in regular work, galloping daily, but not in the form he went last year; Whitehaven was only walking. Still Joseph's was a very strong stable, every class of horse being well represented.

The next arrival was Colonel Robarts, or rather his horses Rocket, Favorite, Bellona, and Growler, all names well known to fame, and the maiden Longden, said to be better than any of them. This stable was not, however, in its usual force. The Barrackpore race course, on which they had been trained, was under water for the greater portion of the train-

ing season, and the horses in consequence arrived at Sonapore fat, and it was soon seen, from the way they galloped, that none of them would humble the pride of the mighty Van; the only one of the lot that was going in good form being Favorite. Colonel Robarts had, besides the above horses, several maidens; but the only ones doing strong work, and that eventually appeared in public, were Warrior and Hector, the former a Waler, the latter an Arab, and a very pretty one, too, but too small to be a race horse. Next came Mr. Major with his two English mares Mayfair and Vivian (late Rinderpest) and his Waler mare Venture. To these he had added a pair of bobtailed Australian mares, whom he had named Variation and Vexation; these three were in tip-top condition, thanks to the fine course at Unundpore, on which they had been trained. They were under the charge of John Irving, who deserved great credit for the fine form his horses displayed. Mayfair had cut herself in crossing the river, so it was doubtful whether she would start or not, but Vivian was looking beautiful; a handsome likeness of her half-brother Vauban, and such a pretty mover, that she was at once installed as first favorite for the St. Leger for all maidens, but a stable accident prevented her starting during the meeting.

Mr. Blacker's stable then arrived under the care of Wheal, consisting of the English horse Dr. Swishtail, the Arab maiden Bloodsucker, and a Cabuli mare called Lady Elizabeth. "Nothing there to set the Ganges on fire," was the public verdict, and all were sorry that so popular a racing man as Mr. Blacker was not better represented. "But where" asked the public "is the great Van all this time?" "Not come yet?" and "Not come yet?" was the cry, till at last it began to be rumoured that he would not come at all! "Too good to be true," thought his opponents, and so it was, for on Sunday "Old Bowler," as Auckland was called in the

stable, marched into Sonapore, followed by Vanderdecken, Prince Alfred, Eruption, and a C.-B. maiden named Ninetta (by Crassus out of Nina by Cotherstone), all in blooming condition, and yet showing that they had done plenty of work; and all agreed that the "great horse" had never looked better. This made five strong stables to contend for the pride of place; but yet a sixth has to be described.

The Dinapore Stable consisting of the waler mare Orphan, and the two maiden country-breds Zenobia, and Defence—the latter an uncommonly fine colt by Selim, out of Fortress—all three in good racing condition, having being trained by their owner, Mr. Howard, who evidently understood the science.

With at least forty horses in the field, all prepared to run, and the course in beautiful order, good racing was confidently expected, though it was hardly hoped that any of his opponents would be able to make Vanderdecken "stretch his neck," and expectations were realised, for he won the Sonapore, Bettiah and Hutwa Cups, though Nancy, beat him in both the Civilians' and Ticcarea Cups, getting 21lbs. in the first and a stone concession in the latter race. Joseph won two races with his country-bred Shamrock, Mr. Major scored a win with both Variation and Venture, Jack Becher won the pony race with little Tom Tit. Mr. Blacker's Bloodsucker collared the Derby from a poor field, and Mr. Howard's C.B. Defence appropriated the Durbangah Cup. Jimmy steered Brown Duchess in, winner of the Hajeepore Stakes, the Moorcroft, and Hack Handicaps, also Bonnie Morn for the Galloway Stakes, Gwatkin Williams' Rosebud for the Galloway Handicap, and Ned Urquhart's Blue Gown for the Cabuli race. All round the meeting was a success, the prizes were well divided, and all owners went away pleased, particularly old Bricky Collins, who gave a Cup to show his satisfaction. This was Mr. Vincent's last year on the Indian Turf.

Mr. Vincent retired to England at the end of 1868. He was a constant writer to the old *Oriental Sporting Magazine* his racing *nom de plume* being "Castor" and his shikari one "Shikar." He used to spear bears on his old pony Ginger. He eventually gave the Barh stud and its relicts to his brother-in-law H. B. Simson for the nominal sum of Rs. 1,000. Jimmy soon closed it.

CHAPTER XV.

YEAR 1869.

Fortunately for the fortunes of Sonapore Mr. R. J. Dickenson, volunteered to take up Teddy Drummond's mantle for 1869, and with Brigadier-General Milne, Fraser McDonell, Fred Collingridge, Ralph Abercrombie, then in the zenith of his glory, and Dick Jenkins, as his henchmen, a capital programme was issued. These were Sonapore's halcyon years, all the cracks of India racing on its course, hospitable camps filled with fair women and brave men, and thorough good fellowship abounding. Never did prospects open more brilliantly, for was not the mighty Australian horse Melbourne coming over from Madras to fling down the gauntlet to the Bengal, Behar and North-West horses; heaps of outside owners were booked, and Jimmy was to introduce us to his gallant bay Australian Delphos, the very best, and most honest chaser India has ever seen. Ned Urquhart, the Tirhoot Planter, had at this meeting the unparalleled luck of, with a single ticket in two lotteries, drawing Melbourne in each, and realising Rs. 900 in one and Rs. 800 in another. Ned was a living wonder to us, everything he touched seemed always to turn to gold. Young Stuart Jackson, now the well-known burly and popular Sylhet tea planter, was then a Beharite and a guest of Mr. Abercrombie's; filled with his host's good cheer, and champagne, he entered a

lottery room for the first time in his life, took a few tickets, as is often the case, was uncommonly lucky, drawing Melbourne and getting a big price for him. It was at this meeting that young Sir Claude Champion De Crespigny sent his horse and trap, slap at the race course rails, just for a lark, the nag jumped and the trap smashed them, fortunately with no damage to the madcap driver or his fellow passengers. Sir Claude had no business to be at the meeting, as he had come away from his Regiment at Lucknow without leave, having merely left a letter on his chief's table asking if he might absent himself. On arrival he found a wire ordering his immediate return, but affecting to misunderstand it he sent a deferred answer "Thanks for leave granted." He then got a peremptory one, meanwhile he had all the fun of the fair. When he got back the Brigade Major strongly advised him not to go on the race course as the General would certainly put him under arrest, five minutes afterwards he met the General, who told him the same story about the Brigade Major, but he was too great a favorite not to be forgiven and an apology got him off. Debonair Charley, Marten, and Colonels Robarts, and Monty Turnbull, were among the visitors. The Rifle Brigade, then at Dinapore, were in full force, that good rider Captain, now Colonel St. Paul, one of them. The lotteries buzzed briskly even on the first night, and the number of grand horses using the course on off mornings, was a sight to warm sportsmen's hearts. Mr. Vincent's old mare Miss Trelawney, who had run successfully the previous year as Adventuress, and was now the property of John Wheal the trainer, looked a picture, so did Melbourne, and the handsome Favorite, but Longden seemed all off. It was obvious that the quality of the English and Australians imported had improved greatly since last year, and that the once invincible Vanderdecken and Rocket would no longer hold their own. Miss Trelawney won the Leger, though Octavia and Longden had

been made equally hot favorites; and again an outsider in Favorite, got home from Detrimental, who was villainously ridden by Couchman. Shamrock won the Tirhoot Stakes, and again came an upset in the Derby, Colonel Roberts' Cyclone, who only brought thirty dibs in the lottery, beating Longhope, who fetched Rs. 300, and Akbar, who brought Rs. 360. For the second day Edward Studd (senior) had given a handsome cup value a thousand rupees and for this all the cracks faced the flag. Five, two thousand rupee lotteries, filled on the event, Melbourne, with Challoner up, won easily, Favorite second. Jimmy on Hotspur, won the Moorcroft Stakes, and Mr. Stewart's Akbar the Durbangah Cup. The Civilians' Cup on the third day, fell to Melbourne, who had only Detrimental, Rocket, and Driver, to oppose him. In the Sonepore Stakes Handicap, Sunbeam beat the favorite Shamrock, Delphos walked over for the Corinthian, and Blackwatch won the Hajeepore Stakes, Shahzadie, Jack Becher's mare, beat Mr. Beadon's Bullfinch, in a pony race in heats. Jack was too good-natured for words; an unblushing onlooker, after Jack's pony had won the second heat so easily that it was twenty to one on her, offered to take half of her lottery risk, and Jack actually complied.

The next morning was big with the fate of Melbourne, and Favorite, the former carrying this time seventeen pounds more than when they last met. Melbourne went for a ridiculously high price in the lotteries, Rs. 1,300, and was backed at odds against the field. The stable had no money on, but they put Joseph up, Octavia with four stone from the crack, made slow running. Miss Trelawney wanted the pace made for her, but no one obliged her. Up to the half mile post, they only cantered, but when they began to gallop at the quarter mile post, they were racing in earnest, opposite the stand Joseph on Melbourne was half a length behind Favorite, and had to take up his whip, but to no purpose, for the mare won by a

head, it was an intensely exciting finish. Then Detrimental, the favorite, with seven pounds more than Rocket, won the Doomraon Cup cleverly, by a length.

Then came the Behar Cup Handicap, for Arabs, the talent spotted Sunbeam to win, with Akbar next, and a pretty race it was, Sunbeam winning, Akbar second. The knowing ones picked out Octavia to win the Hutwa Cup, and she won in a canter. They backed Mayfair, and she won, so that had not the heavy betting race, Melbourne's, been a fluke, punters would have had a good day, but the gilt was most effectually taken off the gingerbread, in the first and great race.

On the Fifth Day, the winning Handicaps had all to be made. Some fifty horses were handicapped, and very well the Stewards did their task, after hours of hard work. It is a very easy thing to pick a hole in a handicap, which has been very difficult to make. In the first class Handicap, Favorite met Melbourne on three pounds worse terms than when she beat him before; while Miss Trelawney, and Octavia, were both in on worse terms. Miss Trelawney was, however, supposed to be a regular sticker after the pace had been good for a mile and a half, but Melbourne, with Challoner up, won easily from Favorite, Miss Trelawney handy. For the second class handicap, Sunbeam got only a few pounds from the walers Bellona and Delphos, both fast and fit. The gallant son of the desert beat the latter easily, and made a good fight of it from the distance with the other, but the waler mare wore him down, and won pretty easily at last, by half a length. For another handicap, Variation had a walk over. For the Hack Handicap, Blackwatch was beaten off, in slow time. And for the Arab three quarter mile Handicap, with good entries, acceptances and lotteries, Longhope, the favorite, beat Eclipse by half a length, but was beaten by a neck on the post, by Rising Star, whose drawer in the

lottery bought him for thirty rupees. A hurdle race was cleverly won by Polly Studd, on Jack Becher's handsome brown Encounter, beating Captain St. Paul on Stella, and Jimmy's pretty little mare, Brown Duchess, ridden by owner. Joseph came a lovely cropper over the preliminary hurdle. A good sell was perpetrated one morning. Sir Claude de Crespigny bet Old Lavelle, of Bangalore, one of the Southern Confederacy, a case of champagne, that he'd carry him on his back a hundred yards, on a racing day, between the races, and would run the distance in fourteen seconds. The bet was booked and both carrier and rider appeared. "I am ready" said rider, "Strip first" said carrier, "I said I'd take *you* not your clothes—so strip or stump up." Midst roars of laughter the sell was accepted, and the wine drank that night by the jockeys at dinner. Grateful indeed were all to Mr. and Mrs. Dickenson, and the Stewards, for a meeting which has scarcely ever been eclipsed, and at which as Stuart Jackson expressed himself "the fun and divarshun were too lovely for words."

CHAPTER XVI.

YEAR 1870.

Although so far removed from head-quarters as Ghazipore, Mr. Dickenson consented to pilot the meeting of 1870, and his programme drew good entries; a lot of new names among the owners showed the public confidence in the management. Bombay, the North-West, and Calcutta sent in their contingents, and it was confidently hoped the Governor General, Lord Mayo, would be present, and run horses, but he had to put off his visit, because it was found necessary to postpone the races from the original date, the 3rd to the 15th November. Floods had swamped the course in the middle of October, fear of fever kept many ladies away, and consequently camps were smaller than in 1869. Black Eagle, with John Irving up, won the Leger. Favourite walked over for the

Bettiah Cup, and grand fields turned out for the Countrybred Tirhoot Stakes, and the Arab Derby. Bumph Freeman's Lur-line beat nine beauties in the former, and Zillzillah won the latter, after a hard tussle with the favourites Silvertail, and Grey Warrior. On the second day, old Rocket got the best of Longden, Miss Trelawney and Centurion in the Ticcaree Cup. Aga Khan's beautiful Silvertail got home for the Durbhangah Cup. Colonel Robarts' Bellona scooped the Planters' Purse, Black Princess the Moorcroft, and then came the G. R. race, which was won by that sporting young civilian Mr. Power on Baronet, beating Gilbert Nicolay, Bob Hill and Ted Hickey. On Saturday only Black Eagle, would face Favourite for the Civilians' Cup, but the mare was off, and he won easily. Jimmy matched Delphos for Rs. 500, to run half a mile, against the English mare North Star, but got beaten; Silvertail proved good enough to score again over a Cup value eight hundred rupees given by Colonel Robarts. Portia, with Jimmy up, beat Mr. Power on Baronet, for the Hajeepore Stakes, and Ned Urquhart won a pony race on Edward Beadon's Orion. Favorite won the Doomraon Cup, and Jimmy scored another win for Mr. Beadon, on his galloway Seagull. The last day was uneventful, Black Eagle won the Hutwa Cup and Bellona the Patna Stakes. Again the prizes were well divided and the meeting passed pleasantly enough, though the native fair had broken up.

CHAPTER XVII.

YEAR 1871.

In 1871 Thoby Prinsep, Magistrate of Patna, was at the helm, his henchmen being Fraser McDonell, Colonel Bray in command of the 96th Regiment at Dinapore, and R. B. Jenkins, Commissioner of Patna. Dick Jenkins was one of the best of good fellows and it took a lot to make him lose his temper. He had some very fine pointers, and one day was out

shooting with a junior civilian, a Mr. Davison who had a very complimentary nickname; Davison missed the partridge he aimed at, but potted the Commissioner's dog, which rolled over dead as a herring, Jenkins dropped his gun, looked at Davison and thundered out "Y're a—fool, Sir," and off he went home; Davison bolted back to his Sub-division in a blue funk. Mr. Abercrombie, the Opium Agent, better known as "Bicrom," and Fred Collingridge completed the body of Stewards for that year. Sonepore never has seen, and probably never will again see, such a year as this was, for Lord Mayo, the most popular Viceroy that ever represented Her Imperial Majesty, was present, and in addition, the mighty Jung Bahadoor, Prime Minister of our staunch ally Nepaul, with a bodyguard of 300 Gurkhas, a harem of pretty, lively, Nepaulese Princesses, and a following which attracted even more admiration from the natives, on account of their barbaric pearl and gold, than even the scarlet uniformed chuprassies, and bodyguard, of the herculean Irish Earl. Unfortunately the racing was poor, although the horses gathered there represented the best in the country. Sir Seymour Blane had gone home and Joseph now had Mr. Raphael Solano's string from Arrah; by this time the large-hearted young Spanish zemindar was slowly, but surely, ruining himself over the green turf, and even more seductive green cloth; he had Bridesmaid, an English mare of no mean reputation, and the Arabs Suliman, and Rising Star. Tommy Tingey steered them. John Wheal, who had then charge of the strong string of Mr. Mullick, of the Seven Tanks, Calcutta, brought them all up to the meeting, the black mare Moonlight, the brown filly Camelia and the chestnut Miss Trelawney—all English—the Australian Centurion, the beautiful black country-bred Gipsy, and the Arabs Acrobat and Prince Regent. Finch, the nice little English light weight lad, rode for the stable; the untimely death of this straight and good rider, a few years after this, was uni-

versally regretted, both by his brother professionals and the patrons of the turf. Mr. Lethorn, the sporting contractor, was there in full fig, a marvel of the tailor's art, his striped unmentionables being really things of beauty, while a Jew slopshopkeeper would have wept over his coats. With long Oscar Dignam to train, and ride for him, and such horses as Karpas, Call, Echo, Verbies, the Arabs Abu Jenab, and Abdool Rahmon, Mr. Lee looked like sweeping the board. Curiously enough we had at that time on the turf, three men, of a class we have never before or since seen on it, and going big licks too, Lethorn, "Bricky" Collins and "Porky" Joe Rainford, all contractors, with not a single aspirate between them, but as true and straight a trio of sportsmen, as ever owned a racer. They raced for the sheer love of it, ran straight as dies, backed their horses pluckily, got periodically stoney, then away they would go, make fresh oof by their profession, and hie back to the turf to spend it. I take my hat off to you Lethorn, Collins, and Rainford, rough and ready as you were, many of your so-called superiors racing in those days, might with advantage have followed the bright example set by you three good men and true. Swipey Bill Brewty, best man on Arabs that ever threw leg over them, was to the fore with some of the lovely desert steeds of H.H. Aga Khan of Bombay, among them Dervish, Silvertail, and Jiram. Mr. Frost, who was Mr. Macalister of the Calcutta ice house, had in charge of Keats, Syrian, and the afterwards, over a country, invincible Kilmore. Of local horses, there were very few, though Messrs. Butler and John, who were beginning to show that in times to come they would be bad to beat, had one or two good ones, particularly a chestnut Australian called Revenge, and a nice looking brown called Planet, who was unfit. The combination was a good one, for few better judges of a horse ever breathed than Arthur Butler, and few finer horsemen than his partner Jimmy McLeod, the Lord of Lall

Serryah, who is one of the few instances of a man who had scarcely ridden as a child, arriving at something very near perfection, by sheer patience, and determination. As a chase rider I have never met a better; strong, cool, dashing, and with fine judgment, it was a treat to watch, or ride alongside him and what a fencer he made of Delphos. G. Rs. did not show up strongly at this meeting, the professionals having it all their own way. Arthur Forbes donned silk once, in the hack race on Venture, and though he failed to get home, showed that the Civil Service had not yet gone quite to the dogs, as far as sport was concerned. Jimmy did not have a single winning mount. Among those who sported silk unsuccessfully, was Kelly Maitland, not yet owner of the invincible Kingcraft; Jack Becher had that tearing pulling demon of a Cabuli, Sultan, who used to be trained in the Tewarreh indigo fields by Harry Abbott; the brute invariably bolted with his seven stone jock, and usually went a couple or three miles ere a hold of him could be got. Being sound as a bell, under such training, he was naturally always fit as a fiddle; and he was scarcely ever beaten in his class. Tom Fraser made his maiden effort in the pig-skin, at this meeting, and rode a country-bred gelding called Trolley, the property of Harry Macdonald, against Sultan steered by Ferdy Shaw; but Tom was beaten out of sight, and retired to his tent to ruminate over the folly of matching an unfit against a fit quadruped; still mountain dew will console any Highlander, and with the discomfited owner he soon gathered consolation. Irish Mayo was as fine a specimen of his dear old country's aristocracy, as ever took shillelagh in hand, or cuddled a colleen, but the Highlanders who stood up alongside of him at that Sonapore gathering of 1871, were a body he would have loved to lead anywhere where danger lay. Harry, John, and Callum Macdonald, Farquhar MacKinnon, Louis Reid, Dr. Kenneth McLeod, and the smaller though equally gallant brothers, Roderick and Jimmy McLeod.

On Monday Lord and Lady Mayo arrived, accompanied by the Marquis and Marchioness of Drogheda, Earl Donoughmore, Major Bourke and a large party. At the lotteries speculation was poor, and only four papers filled. The customary gun, and simultaneous march of the band through the camp, woke up the visitors at daylight, and soon all were *en route* to the course; at a quarter past seven the Viceregal party drove up, and were received by the Stewards, all most killingly got up. Never had such crowds been seen lining the course, and never such a swell assemblage in the grand stand. The bright frocks of the ladies contrasted prettily with the gaudy dresses of the numerous Maharajas, but the two most prominent figures were Lord Mayo, and the mighty Jung Bahadoor. No greater contrasts in humanity could be conceived, the Earl towering over most of his staff and the bystanders, with his fine genial face and kind eyes, every inch a man, and a fitting representative of England's Queen; but while the squat little Gurkha seemed dwarfed alongside of him, there was that in the keen, bright, restless glance, and square jaw of our staunch little friend, that spoke of indomitable courage, stern determination and quickness of resource. He was not a bit abashed, and bore being stared at, and crowded in on, with a *sang froid* and good-natured amusement, that would have done credit to a Yankee. He showed extreme interest in the horses, being particularly pleased with the English mares Bridesmaid, and Miss Trelawney, and also with the many fine Arabs. There was not much delay in marshalling the four competitors for the Leger, and a good-looking lot they were, as they flashed by the grand stand. Jaffer was on the favorite Merryman, and this invincible native jockey, had the task his soul loved, to cut down his field, and make every post a winning one. Victoria, Moonlight, and the local nag Planet, steered respectively by Bowen, Keats, and Donaldson, were never able to head Master Jaffer, and he cantered home an easy winner; another

instance, as Bowen observed when he dismounted, of Aryan injustice to old England. It was at a race at the following Calcutta meeting, that Jaffer having had opposite orders, was remonstrated with by an unlucky backer. Every Jock had been sent out with the same instructions, "Wait on the rest" and the pace in consequence was funereal; Jaffer's memorable reply was, "Why not I wait, why not? What Europeans did do?" For the Bettiah Cup, Call was a strong tip, and Mr. Lee's stable had been made favorite at the lotteries; Joseph, was as good a trainer in India, as he proved afterwards in England, when he brought out the mighty Bendigo; and when Tingey, after riding a judiciously timed waiting race, brought up Bridesmaid with one of his Chifney-like rushes, it was seen that all was over but the shouting. Mr. Lee's luck changed though, in the Tirhoot Stakes, and he scored an easy win with Verbies, who, like Gipsy, who ran second, was a rejected stud-bred—clean bred beauties • these, with no foul Norfolk trotter puddle in their dainty veins. Messrs. Butler and John's Bar None, ridden by a native stable boy, got a fearfully bad start, but she could not have won, even with a good one. She was bred by Frank Vincent at Barh. And then came the Derby, and what a lovely half-dozen they were; little wonder Lord Mayo expressed loud admiration of them. The best jockeys in the country were up, and there was precious little to choose between Dignum, Bowen, Tingey, Bill Brewty, Keats, or little Finch, save that they all gave best to Brewty on Arabs. At the lotteries Abu Jenab in a thousand rupee lottery, had brought Rs. 390, Jyram Rs. 370, the rest bringing smaller sums. The Aga Khan party backed their nag hotly, but the astute Mr. Lee stood by his, as well, and what a race it was. For the first mile, the pretty little fellows ran neck and neck, with ears back, and flags flowing to the wind; Suliman showed in front half a mile from home, Syrian and Acrobat next, then the favorites locked together, their jockeys never moving in the saddle, Frolic last. But

soon the pace quickened, and the leaders were passed, and done with, but to everyone's astonishment, the despised Frolic was at the favorite's girths, and going strong, Bowen as usual lying right along his horse's neck. From the distance a grand set to took place, and from the stand it looked a close thing, but the judge's verdict was Abu by three-quarters of a length; a neck between second and third. Brewty lost his whip at distance, or might have reversed the verdict, for Jyram, though game as a pebble, was lazy like all the best of his class. Such crowds as assembled to see the great English "Lat" Saheb, Jung Bahadoor and the Rajahs had seldom been in evidence at Sonepore, and the police had their hands full. The poor D.S.P. of Sarun's hair nearly turned grey, for the wild little Gurkhas were roaming the fair, thick as fleas on a dog's back, and had they got into conflict with any of the rag tag and bobtail, they would have thought nothing of whipping out their kookries, and slicing off their opponents' cocoanuts. But all went along smoothly, and the sanitary and other camp arrangements reflected great credit on the officers in charge. The lotteries on Wednesday were infinitely superior to those of Monday, Karpos bringing Rs. 600 in a two thousand one on the Ticcree Cup, Bridesmaid Rs. 230, Miss Trelawney Rs. 260, and Victoria Rs. 200, the rest small prices. It was a great night for ticket-takers, and the Secretary had his work cut out. With Abu Jenab out of the Durbangah Cup, the Bombay pair were hot favorites. The Ticcree Cup, 1 mile 5 furlongs, brought out six, Karpos, Bridesmaid, Victoria, Camelia, Kilmore, and Miss Trelawney. Dignum on Karpos got away with the lead, was never caught, and though Tingey rode Bridesmaid all he knew, the long-legged jockey won by half a length; Victoria, Bowen up, third. Then came the mile and a half Durbangah Cup, for which again six came to the post, the race was marred, first by a bad start, and then by the Aga's winning with the wrong horse. He had declared

to win with Dervish, Brewty up, but the pestilent native lad on the really best horse, Jiram, and who had received instructions not to win, unless Dervish was beaten by any of the others, either out of spite against Brewty, or because he had a few dibs of his own on his mount, came with a rush on the post, and won easily. The face of " 'Is 'Ighness' drunken jockey" as Brewty termed himself, was a caution to see. Always as red as a peony, at that moment it was purple, but like the coster he "hadn't a word for it." He never opened his mouth, but even still blacker looked the Aga's party, for they were out over two thousand rupees by the scamp's piece of folly. I'd like to know what happened to that boy when he got back to Bombay, he was probably transferred to the door-keepers' department in the Harem. I can't say my sympathies were with the losers, it served them right for intending to allow their best to be beaten by their worst. It was racing law then in India, but one which has since been sensibly cut out of the rules. Now came a race over which there was no end of fluttering among the local dove-cotes, for three of the *jeunesse dorée* of Behar were to do battle in a half mile hack scurry.

Brave Mr. Frank was the Jockey on Shanks,
And Jimmy steered Warrior bold,
While Arthur Forbes on Venture declared
That he would not be left in the cold.

Fashions were different then to what they are now, Jimmy, as he rode past the post with his Picadilly Weepers flowing in the wind, looked every inch a horseman, so did Frank, (Gilbert Nicolay) and if little Arthur's nose stuck out, as if anxious to get in front of his horse's head, while the sitting down portion of his frame formed an acute angle in the opposite direction, yet the hopes of the Civil Service were in their plucky representative; and Jinks, Albert Mangles, and Thoby shouted encouragingly to him as he cantered down to the post.

Dundreary whiskers were in great demand in those days, and Newgate Fringes, of which Minden Wilson sported a fine specimen, but Gilbert Nicolay's beautiful, long, blonde moustache was so fetching, that when it had won him the sweetest voiced nightingale in Chumparun, clean shaving, of all save the upper lip, was rapidly introduced, and is still the Behar fashion. The race was exciting as far as Messrs. Frank and John were concerned, and resulted after a ding-dong finish, in favor of Shanks by a length, but poor Mr. Forbes was out of it from the start. The day finished with a mile and a quarter sweepstakes for which five went out, and the result was a magnificent struggle between Silvertail, ridden by Brewty, and, Rising Star with Tingey up, a dead heat was the verdict. In the run off, Silvertail won easily.

Jung Bahadur came down in great state, with a bodyguard of about three hundred men. He and his followers had a large piece of ground under the mango trees portioned off to them. On the arrival of the Prince of Nepal, he was met at the river Gunduck by an A.D.C. in the Viceregal carriage and conveyed to his camp, a battery of Royal Artillery saluting him as he entered his encampment, where he was received by his own bodyguard, who presented arms. Jung's many wives had insisted on accompanying him to see and witness the sights, and the fun, and bathe in the sacred Ganges. There were over thirty of these partners of his weal and woes, and as each had a retinue of women servants, there was a goodly number in all. Next day, says Minden Wilson in his little book "Reminiscences of Behar," I went and called on Sir Jung, and found him looking at Lord Mayo's jewellery, and comparing it with his own. Lord Mayo's were beautifully set and shone forth with dazzling resplendency, while Sir Jung's, representing enormous value, were dully set and badly cut. Jung was very affable, and conversed freely in Hindustani, which he spoke well; he

was a little man with a sharp, restless and cruel eye. The face was clever but cunning, and you might hope in vain for mercy if once in his power. The morning after his arrival, he and his suite arrived at the race stand on their state elephants. These animals were magnificently caparisoned with cloths of gold and golden howdahs. A durbar or reception was held at midday on Friday, and all Europeans as well as native gentry, were invited to attend. It was held in a large *shamiana*, at one end of which was a raised platform with two steps up to it. There were three chairs of gold on the dais, chairs in rows down each side of the *shamiana* were placed, the front row to one side for members of Sir Jung's staff, and behind them the native gentry. On the opposite side, chairs were placed for the Europeans, while up the centre was a carpeted walk leading to the dais. Before midday all the chairs were filled, and shortly after Lord Mayo (in court dress, wearing his star and band of the Order of the Garter) walked in. All rose in token of respect, and His Lordship bowing to each side, took his seat in the centre chair of the dais; as he did so, a royal salute vollied forth and the band of the European regiment played God save the Queen. A few minutes after the Viceroy had taken his seat, a commotion outside announced the arrival of Sir Jung and suite; again the guns boomed, the guard of honor saluted, and Sir Jung Bahadur entered, sparkling with jewels, wearing on his head a golden helmet studded with precious stones and on top a ruby valued at three lakhs of rupees, out of which dropped bird of paradise feathers. He was met by one of the Secretaries, while his son or brother was taken in hand by another. These Secretaries, taking them by the hand, walked them halfway up the passage, where officials of higher standing met them and conducted them to the foot of the dais. Lord Mayo descending one step, offered Sir Jung his right, and the other his left hand, and seated them

on either side of him. The other members of his suite had been placed meanwhile by the Junior Secretaries in the front row chairs kept for them. The Governor-General after exchanging a few words with the Nepalese Magnate, desired to be introduced to the members of his suite; on this, the Secretary handed them up one by one, another man calling out their names. Lord Mayo shook hands with some, bowed to others, and they passed on and re-seated themselves. After this, Government House servants, dressed in red and gold, appeared with large trays of *pān*, a leaf in which is enclosed spices, betel nut and a mixture of lime and catechu. The *pān* was made up into little cocked hat shapes, held together with a single clove and beautified by a covering of silver paper. A Secretary went round with the attur-holder and sprinkled a little on each of the suite. Sir Jung and his brother had been specially served. After sitting the time required by durbar etiquette, Sir Jung, according to the custom of Orientals, asked to be allowed to take his departure, which being granted, he rose to leave, all the spectators rising at the same time. The Secretary again handed them down, one man going to a certain spot and making them over to Juniors, till they reached their conveyance, when the guard of honor again saluted. The big guns boomed and Sir Jung returned to his camp. Lord Mayo sat a short time after Sir Jung had retired, then rising, walked down the passage, the spectators rising. As soon as His Lordship was out of the *shamiana*, the audience dispersed. That afternoon the Artillery from Dinapore were to exhibit their skill with their breech loading Armstrong guns to the Nepalese Prince and Generals. There was of course a great crowd to see the performance, in which Sir Jung took the greatest interest. The practice, both with shot and shell, was very good. When the firing had stopped, Sir Jung examined and admired the light cannons; he then gave a general invitation to all to come and witness a review

of his troops, next day. That evening Sir Jung appeared with some of his staff at the ball; they were almost gorgeously dressed. Their idea of the right thing is that the young lady should dance and the lords of creation admire. Several of the ladies went to call on the Ladies Jung Bahadur. They were ushered in by the husband, and were received by the principal and the youngest of the Ranees. One of the ladies who called, described them as cheerful, rather nice looking women with strong Mongolian features, and fair for Orientals. The Ranees on parting with their visitors presented each with a piece of jewellery, the value being suited to the rank of the lady's husband. Next afternoon the Nepalese troops were paraded. They were a fine body of little Goorkhas, with legs that no Highlander need be ashamed of. As they marched past, their band struck up "Should auld acquaintance." They had evidently learned their drill from some old French Officer, for when they went at the double, they kept time to the tap of the drum, which beat the "pas de charge." The last and most amusing evolution was the bayonet exercise quick time. The band struck up "Pop goes the weasel," and the fixed bayonets worked up and down, here and there, in exact time to that well-known old tune. Not many of these gallant little fellows ever saw Nepal again, for cholera broke out in their camp next day, and, though they were hurried off at once, the fatal disease never left them. One thing a Nepalese Goorkha fears greatly is a little soap and water, and to this aversion, was probably due the attack of cholera that proved so fatal to the little force that visited the camp on the occasion. There were several fine elephants among those that came down with the Nepal retinue. While they were at Sonopore, one of the elephants brought to the fair for sale went mad, and, breaking loose, did great mischief, and people were in danger of their lives. Sir Jung hearing this sent one of his hunting elephants after him; he came up to the savage beast on a

sandbank near the river opposite, and at once charged. His Sonepore opponent put down his head and rushed to meet him. With a terrible shock they met, both seemed to stagger for a minute, and then the mad one turned tail and bolted, pursued by the other. The chase was not a long one, for Sir Jung's tusker gained on the other fast, and as he was descending to the lower part of the bank, caught him in the rear with such force, that he drove him head foremost into the sand, where the now very-much-tamed elephant lay, receiving a dig in the ribs now and then from his stronger brother. The Sonepore elephant having hauled down his colors, his mahout or driver mounted on his neck and off he marched, looking as sheepish and cowed as an elephant possibly could look.

It was at this meeting the folly of early morning racing was first publicly discussed, and while no one denied the soundness of the reasons against it, yet Civilians and Planters are alike in being conservative to obstinacy; and so the pernicious custom still continues, though an attempt to alter it is to be made this year. The lotteries buzzed fairly. Echo walked over for the Civilians' Cup, and only three, Silvertail, Rising Star, and Long Hope, went out for the Bedouins, finishing as placed, Kelly Maitland steering Rising Star. For the Hajeepore Stakes four went out, Mr. Lee steering Messrs. Butler and John's Revenge, whose owner steered Bearing Rein for Mr. Prince. Jimmy got off with a flying start, and when Revenge came up with a wet sail at the finish, he could not quite get up, but the irony of fate was apparent here, for Jimmy was over weight, and his own gee got the race much to Jimmy's disgust. Echo won a three-quarter mile sweepstakes, and that ended the third day. The off-day was passed with polo and tennis tournaments, Lord Mayo riding about the fair on his grand weight carrier, Mr. Cox, which brought at the sale of the ill-fated Earl's stud the biggest price ever paid for a hack in India, Rs. 4,300. On Friday the lotteries again

were well attended, and Saturday promised and showed good racing. Events opened with the Sonepore Cup, two miles, which resolved itself into a match between Call and Merryman; the superior condition of the latter won the race, for Jaffir made strong running throughout, and won without effort. A good race was viewed for the Desert Stakes, but again the Aga's star of ill luck was in the ascendant, the stable pinned their faith on Dervish, and bought him at Rs. 350, declining to touch Silvertail; but Brewty had his revenge, for he won on the latter, and the native youth on the favorite was not even placed. Brewty found his tongue this time, and alluded touchingly to the second sell the native Archer had given the stable. A jockey well educated in swear words, can be as forcible as the genuine coster when he likes, and Brewty was fluent and free. Over the Doomraon Cup, speculation at the lotteries had run high, Bridesmaid bringing Rs. 400, Karpos Rs. 360 and Miss Trelawney Rs. 80. Mr. Solano's mare won easily. For the Visitors' Purse four Arabs went out, Dervish, Suliman, Malabar and Syrian, Malabar the favorite, but he ran a rank cur and Suliman won easily. Then Joe Anderson's Seagull won the Galloway Stakes easily, from a poor field, and Kilmore upset a big pot by beating Echo in the mile handicap. Curiously enough both these horses came afterwards into the hands of poor Alf. Abbott, who bought them specially for the meeting at which he met his death, Barrackpore. On the fifth day, Bridesmaid continued her victorious career, and proved herself the best horse at the meeting by carrying top weight safely home in the Hutwa Cup. Silvertail, who had brought Rs. 740 to his lucky drawers at the previous night's lotteries, was backed by his stable, and this time their money was all right, for he won the Patna Stakes easily. Then Dervish brought more oof to the Aga, by beating the favorite Rising Star in the Chupra Stakes. Revenge proved himself *facile princeps* among hacks by winning from Shanks in the

Hack Handicap, and King David turned the tables on his conqueror of the previous day, by beating Seagull at a difference of 1st. 3lbs. in the Galloway Handicap. The meeting ending with the memorable match between Ferdy Shaw and Tom Fraser, Harry Abbott would have steered Sultan himself, but for the fact that just before the meeting, he had been experimenting on a mount which proved harder to ride than the pulling Cabuli. The following account of it, sent to the *Civil and Military*, may act as a salutary deterrent to other equally crack brained youths, who fancy they can ride saurians with impunity. In the words of an eye-witness :—

“ It was in the rains, and we were up at Tewarreh Factory vats, when the jemadar told us that there was a huge alligator under the bridge of the river. Sending for a gun and a couple of bullets we went up to the bridge, and, sure enough, about twenty yards off, there was an enormous ‘ghurial’ some twenty feet long, with his head just visible above the water. A well-directed shot caught him between the eyes; and the brute mortally wounded, plunged into deep water, rolling over and over, and was carried by the tide down towards the bungalow, which was some quarter of a mile off. Running to the vat-house, Abbott seized a long rope lying there, rapidly made a slip-knot in it; and declaring that he was not going to lose so lovely a skin, kicked off his boots, and just as he was—in socks, breeches and shirt—jumped into the river, giving me and a lot of natives the other end of the rope to hold. He got well into the middle of the stream and was quietly treading water while we were all anxiously watching, when suddenly, within two feet of him, the alligator plunged straight up out of the water, snout foremost, as alligators generally do when hit in the head. Without the least hesitation Abbott flung both arms right round the snout, and a regular rough-and-tumble ensued, I yelling to him at the top of my voice to drop it. Presently the brute’s whole body appeared, and Abbott

calmly mounted him, evidently trying the while to disengage the slipnot which had now got tight round his own arm, and to shove it over the brute's head.'

"Then the alligator started swimming, and we followed down the bank, when, just as we were opposite the bungalow, he pulled dead up, brought his tail out of the water and with a fearful side sweep capsized Abbott, snapping at him as he fell. Then came another fight, such as I never wish again to see; the pair eventually disappearing beneath the water. We hauled away at the rope, thinking it was still attached to Abbott, when unexpectedly we saw him come up a few yards from the bank, evidently almost senseless. A Rajpoot peon jumped in and dragged his master up the slope. He was bleeding awfully and was a gruesome sight. Shirt in ribbons, arms and chest torn all over, both hands badly maimed, and the right foot completely crushed. He came to at once, and only said the 'The rope's safe over his nose'; and so it was, sure enough, for the natives to whom I had thrown the rope were now busily engaged in hauling the wounded saurian on shore.

"I never saw a man in such a mess; and, to add to the horror, down to the edge of the river, just as we had dragged up her half-killed husband, rushed his young wife wringing her hands, and naturally half out of her wits with terror. While she was standing over him, and the servants were carrying him to the house, he started singing 'Home they brought her warrior dead.' A nice time of it we had, out in a jungle with no appliances to tie the severed arteries, and with a patient who would insist in trying to get out of bed to see how the skinning of the alligator was getting on. We tried to hire kahars, but the whole country was under water, and they refused to budge from home; so we put him into a *shampony* and took him in to the doctor at Mozufferpore, taking from 10 o'clock on Tuesday till 7 o'clock the next morning to do the

twenty miles. Nothing but his high spirit and total inability to give in kept him alive through that journey. He ought to have died from loss of blood, for the wounds burst out every time there was a bad jolt over the breaks in the road, and they were legion. And then the poison from the bites and danger of lockjaw would have been sufficient to settle any nervous fellow. Luckily he has not got such a thing as nerves in his composition; hence, I suppose, his escape."

Rowland Hudson came out to India this year at the age of eighteen, and Red Gauntlet was his first racing mount out here. We have never seen his equal in Behar, for his first two years, he rode over a country as well as on the flat, and one of his best performances, between the flags, was when he won on that hard-pulling, shifty horse Blackboy, at Moẓufferpore, beating Jimmy, who was on the best chaser in India, the white-faced Delphos, judge's verdict a length; but after the sad accident at home to his brother, who was killed in a hurdle race, Rowland acceded to the wishes of his relatives and gave up cross country racing.

CHAPTER XVIII.

YEAR 1872.

When 1872 began, Indian racing was undoubtedly in a parlous state, chiefly due to the red hot plunging of a not too honorable clique of men frequenting the North-West meetings. Neglecting their legitimate business, they went from fixture to fixture, vainly endeavouring to pick up at one shop what they had lost at another, lax Secretaries refraining from posting and allowing them to continue their unprincipled course. Little or no settling took place, and several meetings were consequently frequented by the hard-up crew who endeavoured to pigeon each other. Even in Calcutta the system of settling was unsatisfactory. Instead of the Secretary^e keeping the accounts and collecting and disbursing the monies, the lottery

paper was given over to the buyer of the winning horse, and he had to run his chance of catching the losers, but the public were waxing wroth, and reform was insisted on; one big defaulter was handed up and his game stopped for the time. The worst of it was that several of the principal sinners were brilliant horsemen, who might have been ornaments instead of discredits to the Turf, could they have refrained from gambling and confined themselves to riding for others. Behar suffered indirectly, and had to regret the loss of Mr. Raphael Solano's stable from its meetings, for Joseph and his employer had come to ructions. In spite of numerous wins the account was on the wrong side, and eventually Joseph put Mr. Solano into court, but lost his case, the judge throwing it out on the grounds that promissory notes for Rs. 7,000 and Rs. 740 on which Joseph sued, were tainted with a partly illegal consideration, and therefore could not be successfully sued on in a Court of Law. Some years later, Joseph returned to England, became one of the most successful trainers in the country, and died a wealthy man. The High Court reversed the local judgment, and Joseph eventually recovered some of his money. But Solano burst up, and his stable was sold. Behar men had had a nasty jar over the Bengal Annual Steeplechase, the last chase ever held inside the Calcutta flat course. First we lost that fine young horseman poor Wilkinson, who, riding Messrs. Arthur and John's second string Baronet, fell at the third fence—post and rails—and broke his neck. Jimmy won the race on Delphos, Captain Phillips on Challenger second; the latter objected to Jimmy for having missed a fence, but as Jimmy had come in by himself, the judge, thinking all the rest had come to grief, left his box to lead Delphos in, so though the Stewards, while holding Captain Phillips' objection valid, found it a fact the jump had been missed by Delphos, and therefore disqualified him, yet they argued that as there had been no judge in the box, Captain Phillips could not win either,

so the race was declared by them null and void. Then we had to mourn the loss of Lord Mayo, done to death by a foul assassin's cruel knife at the Andamans. But in Tirhoot itself, things looked fairly rosy, for Jimmy McLeod and Gwatkin Williams were gradually bringing into the district an ever increasing and yearly improving lot of racers; as fast as one got something good enough to win, the other would try and go one better, but up to this the Lall Serryah stable held pride of place. Lower Bengal, too, lost a good sportsman, well known to us up here as a champion slayer of tigers and the unclean beast; five hundred of the former, and boars by the thousand, had fallen under his unerring rifle and undeviating spear; known as Black Simmy, to distinguish him from our Judex, Mr. F. B. Simson was a good man and true, and though not a racing man, was always ready to help keep up race fixtures at any station he was sent to. He has a son in the Kernaul Indigo Concern, who, though not yet a mighty Nimrod like his worthy dad, is the best hand at beans and bacon in the district; they call him "The Stodger." That dullest of bores, and most sanctimonious of prigs, George Campbell, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, who was always poking his nose into things that did not concern him, ruled then at Belvedere, and because poor Wilkinson met his death in the Bengal Grand Annual, he must needs step in and stop chasing on the old course; and then because pretty plain speaking was used, and repeated to him, in his nasty, spiteful way he revenged himself by threatening to prosecute the promoters of the time-honored Derby Lottery; and as in addition to worrying the general community, he worried his subordinates inordinately, he was very much beloved by all sections of the community. The Maori's poems, compiled from the *Oriental Sporting Magazine*, were published this year in book form, some of them very clever, particularly one on the death of Jimmy McLeod's pet Arab pigsticker Bonnie Morn, and the song "A Planter's Bungalow." Rowland Hudson

made his *début* as a race rider this year; next to Colonel Elliott (Mr. Locke), Rowland is the best G.R. we have seen in India. As Thoby Prinsep had departed to Calcutta, Fraser McDonell once more took up the reins as Secretary of Sonapore, the rest of the Stewards being the same as the preceding year. The dates fell early in November. Of the previous year's racing men Wheal was again to the fore, with a fine string of Baboo Shama Churn Mullick's, little witting that a few months would see his sporting employer relegated to that sphere specially set apart for good Hindoos, and his grand stud brought to the hammer. Shama Churn was a straight and thorough sportsman, and John Wheal worked honestly for him, though even then John bore the reputation, not unjustly, of being a confirmed grumbler. He had with him that grand Australian filly Phillipine, the English mare Moonlight, and the Arabs Prince Regent, and Acrobat; John Irving had the Bombay stable, and Bricky Collins' old champion Vanderdecken, who changed hands frequently through the meeting, once being bought by Tom Gibbon, who eventually sold him to Rowland Hudson. There was plenty of go still in the three-cornered, fiddleheaded, honest old buggy nag, and none of his owners ever lost money on him. But *the* stable of the lot was brought by Ali Abdoola, who had just got out of a mess at Bangalore, where his then confederate, Kelly Maitland, had been warned off for a year, for having, as was alleged, offered a present to Hackney the jockey. Ali was allowed to race the horses, having severed connection with Kelly; many thought Kelly badly treated, but the authorities took a harsh view, and consequently we did not see the versatile correspondent of the *Pioneer* that year at Sonapore. Ali was accompanied by a bright little daughter, prettily dressed in Arab costume, who was quite at home in the racers' loose boxes; she is the same plucky lady who is running the dairy farm at Allahabad. Ali had the handsomest horse we had ever seen in India up to this—the great Australian chesnut Satellite; he had

also those beautiful Arabs The Earl, Shanghai, Sunbeam, and Chieftain, and the walers Jehangir, and Driver. Ali throughout the meeting behaved in the most generous and sporting manner, often keeping his nags in the stable to give other owners a chance, when he could have won the race for a certainty; this, naturally, warmed all hearts to him. An Australian bred Irishman was there, named O'Shea, with a newly-landed and uncommonly promising, but obviously unfit waler called Harkaway, which might have turned into a good horse, save for the cruel bucketing he got at Sonapore when still weak from the effects of the voyage. The local talent was all there, Arthur Butler and Jimmy McLeod had a strong string, and won a fair share of races. Gilbert Nicolay was shaping very well, his long legs, good hands and temper, making him the *beau idéal* of a race rider. Tingey once said a very funny thing about Gilbert. It was at the Chupra Races, 1879, of which poor Gwatkin Williams was Honorary Secretary. Talkaway had just won the Hutwa Cup, Blue Bell, Tingey up, second, and Gilbert was third. When Gwatkin handed Harry Abbott the Cup which had on its cover a mounted jockey with extraordinary attenuated legs, Tingey, who was standing by, remarked, "Why that cup must have been meant for Mr. Nicolay to win, for the jock on the top is the dead snip of him." What did not add to the fun of the fair of 1872, was the presence of Sir George Campbell; he had no sympathy for sport, and was an unmitigated nuisance. The racing opened with Ali's Jehangir winning the St. Leger from Phillipine, Jimmy's Gabbler and Mr. Phillips' Longwood beaten off. Then Dick Turpin won the Bettiah Cup, only Moonlight opposing him. Two only turned out for the Tirhoot Stakes for C.B.'s, Mr. Seventank's Selina easily beating Jimmy's Lady Hamilton. For the Derby five pretty Arabs went out, Ali's two, Shanghai and Chieftain, first and second. Jimmy won the Planters' Cup on his nice mare Duchess; Harry Fraser, not much of a horseman, second.

On the second day Dick Turpin, conceding a lump of weight, made mincemeat of Black Eagle, Phillipine and Karpos, in the Ticcree Cup. Chieftain again showed his superiority over the other Arabs, by romping home for the Durbangah Cup, and good old Vanderdecken beat Portia, Harkaway, Hermit, and Driver, in the Planters' Purse. Driver took Dignum back to breakfast, bolting at the corner and going straight to his stable. Then Rowland Hudson steered Harry Fraser's Glenover prettily home for the Moorcroft Stakes, and so ended the second day. On the third day we were treated to a sight of the handsome Satellite, who walked over for the Civilians' Cup, a bright golden chesnut two-year-old colt by Premier out of Edith by King Alfred; he looked as he walked round, the very picture of a throughbred. Even crusty George Campbell could not refrain from expressing admiration for such a beauty. The Earl won the Bedouin Stakes, and Jimmy's country-bred Lurline won the Hajeepore Stakes in a canter. His luck was in, for he followed it up by riding his own Planet in winner of the selling race, old Van, with Rowland up, second. On the fourth day Satellite had another walk over, none of the others entered caring to oppose him in the Sonéapore Cup. Sunbeam beat Volcano in the Desert Stakes; Jehangir won the Dumraon Cup from Black Eagle and Karpos, and Shanghai won the Galloway Plate, Ali riding himself and beating Gilbert Nicolay on Harry Fraser's Kintail, Johnstone Smith's Kathleen third. Then came a hack race, at the weighing out for which Jaffir caused intense amusement. Mr. O'Shea had a coffee colored Eurasian jockey, who when in the scales put up the full professional penalty, "That not right," said Jaffir, "you need only put up half, you not whole white." Vanderdecken won the race with the crusher of 11st. 8lbs. up, beautifully ridden by Irving. Dick Turpin won the Hutwa Cup on the last day, proving himself after Satellite the best horse at the meeting. Vanderdecken again brought grist to the mill, win-

ning the Patna Stakes from Portia and Planet. The victorious Shanghai had another laurel in the Chupra Stakes, winning a pretty race by a head from his stable companion Chieftain. Then Ali generously presented a purse of Rs. 500 for a handicap made by himself. Six started, and how good the allotment of weights was, was shown by all the horses being locked together at the distance, and midst the greatest excitement Jimmy squeezed Portia home, a length in front of Duchess, with Donaldson up. The meet ended with Mr. Vowell, the local Civilian, steering Kathleen home in front of Kintail in the Galloway Handicap. Two months after this Jimmy showed the stern stuff he is made of by going down to Calcutta and, getting up after a week's dose of fever he rode Johnstone Smith's Dauntless to victory in the Ballygunge Cup, making running from flag to winning post.

CHAPTER' XIX.

YEAR 1873.

The year 1873 was a sorrowful one for Behar, it rang the death knell of the Pusa Stud. Sad it was to see the pretty fillies being drafted away to other studs; and to realise that in another few years the neat paddocks would be spoilt by the plough of the ryot, and tobacco and Indian corn substituted for lucern and oats. Moreover, we had to mourn the death of a good man and true, that popular Civilian poor Rowland Vyner Cockerell, who, under his assumed name of Vyner, had nominated largely for this year's Sonapore Races. He was killed by his horse falling with him at Simla. A thorough sportsman and most popular official, he had none of the insufferable conceit of his brother Horace, who used to put on no end of side. There is a lovely story told of Horace. He once went into the Bank of Bengal at Patna to cash a cheque, and the youngster then in charge was new to the place, and did not recognise the little tin

god. Being busy checking some accounts he did not attend at once to Horace, who walked up and down, fussing and fuming. At last he looked up and said, "I'll attend to you, Sir, in one minute, please take a chair." "Take a chair," roared Horace, "do you know who I am, Sir? I am Mr. Horace B. Cockerell, Secretary to the Government of Bengal." "Oh indeed," simpered the youth, "then will you please take two chairs." Horace nearly exploded, but the story leaked out, and he got terribly roasted over it. Poor Rowland was of very different calibre, and the grief at his untimely demise was general. Held in high estimation, both as an official and as a member of society, his loss was felt by natives and Europeans alike. Blackboy, the steeplechaser, who carried everything before him at Calcutta the year before, was one of his best horses. He was a Steward of the Turf Club and a valuable one; he was, moreover, one of the strongest advocates for a new Stand and afternoon racing in Calcutta. Messrs. Abercrombie, Paddy Hudson, and Richardson, were Stewards of Sonapore for 1873. There was a bad show of horses at the fair that year, but the meeting was a big one as far as a gathering went. Genial Albert Mangles and the Bankipore contingent were all there, and the capital Band of the 2nd N. I. was daily lent by Colonel Shaw to play during the races. The Planters were there in great force; burly Harry McDonald had been induced to go in for a horse with Polly Studd, and the huge Highlander was a host in himself at the lotteries. A rare good chap was dear old Harry; one who left the district universally liked, and never having made an enemy. Polly Studd was a demon of mischief, always playing the most risky practical jokes on Harry; in more than one case nearly breaking his neck, for twenty stone does not fall lightly, when shot out of a dogcart, from the wheel of which the pin has been previously removed. Mr. Bates from Madras had intended to run his horses at this

meeting, but they did not arrive in time; Vinall, his neat English jockey, was there and had a fair amount of wins. Brewty was in charge of Mr. Jones' string, including the mighty Satellite, and Wheal, now owner of Phillipine, which he had bought at poor Shama Churn Mullick's sale, had come, but he only brought the mare. He was in a particularly captious spirit this meet, and would not let Phillipine face Satellite the first day, though the result of the Ticcaree Cup on the second day showed him he was unreasonable in not having started her. Kelly Maitland had that good Arab galloway Crossbie, but did not appear once in the pigskin, though his nag was piloted to victory by Omer, in the Arab Handicap, which the astute one had persuaded all the owners present to subscribe for. Kelly had a silvery tougue and fluent pen, and was out and out the best handicapper we have ever had in India. Mr. Macallister had only Dolly Varden and Syrian. The racing opened with the Leger, which only brought out Baronet and Scalpel, the former winning easily. Satellite walked over for the Bettiah Cup. It was a wonder to us all how Satellite stood up as long as he did for he flung his legs, all over the place and was always in danger of over reaching. The Tirhoot Stakes for C.B.'s did not fill, then a hack race brought out a field of six, three of the Lall Serryah stable filling the places, Driver steered by Jimmy, the winner, Polly Studd and a smart individual named Chichester, also sported silk in the race. Polly could ride a bit over a country, but he was no good on the flat against Rowland Hudson, Jimmy, or Gilbert Nicolay. The Derby was a wretched show, Desert Born playing with Rhiddni, the only other starter, and winning easily. The fifth race was the inauguration one, of what was termed the Behar Stakes, for all horses purchased by residents of the district, within certain dates, for Rs. 1,000 or under; seven stripped for it, Jimmy on his own nag Barrister won easily. On the next day excitement was rife, for Phillipine was to meet the great Satellite

who was conceding her one stone thirteen pounds, but the colt failed to do it, and the mare romped home. The Dur-bangah Cup only brought out Moosa and a very third class Arab of Gwatkin's, J.B., in front of whom Moosa had simply to canter to win. The Planters' Purse brought out six, Driver and Red Gauntlet were favorites at the lotteries; but the dead outsider Scalpel was neatly piloted to the front by Vinall, Jimmy on Driver second, Rowland on Black Eagle third. An Arab Handicap for a purse of Rs. 300, presented by Mr. Macallister, proved a fine race, Delawar, Moosa, Chieftain, Crossbee and Syrian placed as named. Major Lindsay rode his own horse, carrying top weight, ten stone, and he would have got home, but being too sure of Chieftain's capacity, he made the unpardonable mistake of making running. Finch and Brewty quietly waited on him, and both squeezed in, in front of the amateur; a neck dividing the three. Two poor hack races, with the local G.R's up, ended the day, Rowland winning the Moorcroft Stakes on Revenge, from Bar None and Portia, and Jimmy on the honest studbred rejection Parody, beating the walers Daybreak and Redgown. Bertie Short bought Daybreak shortly after this, and turned him into a chaser, but how he escaped breaking his neck off him, was a marvel, for Daybreak generally fell; though more than once he was remounted by his plucky owner and won. The third day opened with two walks over by Baronet and Syrian, respectively, for the Civilians' Cup and Bedouin Stakes. Then came Kelly's Handicap, pulled off by his own Crossbee. Parody, who had been sold overnight by Jimmy to Harry Fraser, or, rather, Harry Fraser and Donald Reid, who raced as Mr. Donald, upset a pot on Red Gauntlet, Gilbert Nicolay on the winner, beating his own crock with Jimmy up. Then came a handicap for a bracelet presented by the Behar Camp, in the course of which that brute Miss Bertram twice bucked Gilbert off, once in the preliminary and

once at the start. Rowland was the only one who could sit her, but she shifted even him occasionally. Deerfoot walked over for a pony race, and Rowland won a hack sweepstakes on Black Eagle, Driver having bolted with Jimmy. Walks over again began the fourth day ; nothing would face Satellite for the Sonepore Cup, Moosa for the Desert Stakes, or Baronet for the Doomraon Cup. Delaware beat Moosa and Crossbee in the Visitors' Purse, and Scalpel again proved best among the second classers, by beating Black Eagle, Gabbler, Nelly and Revenge. Red Gauntlet winning the Selling Race ended a poor day. Again the pulling bay brought grist to Gilbert's mill on Saturday, winning the Hack Handicap with Rowland up, Gilbert riding Parody third, and Jimmy dividing them on Nelly, late Moonlight. Chieftain won the Chupra Stakes, Black Eagle the Free Handicap, and Mr. Hill's Crown Prince the Behar Handicap. This ended the meeting for 1873. Mrs. Fraser McDonell decorated the ball-room and looked after the suppers, which were served in inimitable style, the meeting was socially a capital one, and the racing all round not bad. Mrs. H. B. Simpson, *née* Vincent, whose husband was then Judge of Bankipore, was a veritable Lady Bountiful to the unfortunate jockeys and trainers who had no place to put up in save the tatti horsesheds at Sonepore. Both as they came and went through Bankipore, she would feed them sumptuously, and, moreover, send them over to Sonepore tea, sugar, bread, tinned provisions and other little luxuries. Small wonder they all worshipped her. Gilbert Nicolay was very full of himself this meeting, and had come without his wife, who was pleasingly employed looking after her bairns at the Factory ; he was in the zenith of his good looks, and at one of the balls was flirting desperately with a very pretty girl, who took him for an eligible bachelor, and had completely lost her heart to his speaking blue eyes and long blonde moustache. They were sitting in the verandah (for there were no "Kala juggahs" in those decorous days), between

dances, and he was whispering soft nothings in her shell-like ear, when up came Blaney Hickey, a typical blundering Irishman, who had only arrived that evening, and not seen Gilbert till then. "Hullo old chap, delighted to see you," he blurted out; "How are the wife and twins?" Just fancy that unhappy girl's feelings, her hopes dashed thus rudely to the ground—shattered was her idol, gone was the romance. "Twins," she shrieked; "take me at once to my chaperon." Over the windows of sorrow let us draw down the blinds. Sheepishly did the base deceiver lead the heart broken lassie to her protector, and then off he went to slaughter Blaney. In one of the races that year, old Bill Brewty, the jockey, who had been imbibing pretty freely the night before, was riding a bay countrybred, which at the mile and a quarter post bolted off the course into the trees, and hung itself up among the ropes of a tent; the occupant, a crusty old fellow, came out and said, "This is not the race course, my man," "I know its not Boss," answered the irrepressible one; "but have you got a drink." The old gentleman's language was decidedly strong, but Brewty had to retire without a nip.

CHAPTER XX.

YEAR 1874.

The year 1874 was to introduce to the Indian Turf that great colt Kingcraft, who proved himself in this and after years an equine wonder. Owing to Mr. Fraser McDonell's transfer, George Porter, another good natured Civilian, ran the show, and a very good Secretary he made; a fair number of horses turned up from all parts of the country. The Lall Serryah stable was particularly strong, and if Maitland had a clinker in Kingcraft, Fisherboy, trained by Jimmy, and belonging to Harry Fraser and Bumph Freeman, was also going to turn out one of the best horses of the year. Then they had Finette, Othello, Amethyst, Philanthropist, Fez, Black Eagle, Red Gauntlet, Fireworks, Canton-Sue, Bedad, Vaudeville, Scot, and that

bolting beast Driver ; a strong stable, and one that wanted to pick up a goodly proportion of purses to pay for oats. Kelly Maitland had only the colt Kingcraft and the useful Crossbee, but they amply paid their way ; John Wheal was training Kingcraft for him. Dacca had found a rival local sportsman to the generous Nawab, in the person of that open-handed Zemindar Baboo Mohuny Mohun Dass, whose horses Sir William, Anarchy and Storm, in charge of Harry Ryder, a good trainer and jockey, were a welcome addition to the meeting. Mr. Macallister, now in partnership with Mr. Pitt, had a moderate lot in Dolly Varden, Kilmore, Lexinton and Barmaid. Bill Brewty had again come with a Bombay string, Delawar, Merry-legs, Buttercup and R.Y. Joe Rainford, now making money and training at Dinapore, had a rotten lot, Pirate, Vivian and Coquette. Wheal had two Arabs Nizam and Saladin ; Mr. Hope, Judge of Chupra, had two useless brutes, Hopeful and Hopeless, but the only planters represented outside the Lall Serryah stable, were Mr. Bob Wilson, who had Ruby, Norah, Barmaid and little Bessie, Mr. Sherman and Lawrence Crowdy who had only one nag each. At the first night's lotteries the attendance was poor, and all George Porter's eloquence failed to fill more than two lotteries, one on the Behar Stakes of a thousand, the horses selling wretchedly and only bringing Rs. 590, and one on a hack race, got up when it was found that the Leger was to be a walk over for Fisherboy and the Bettiah Cup a walk over for Dolly Varden. After these two had paraded before the Stewards, four went out for the Behar Stakes, Fisherboy easily beating Finette, Tom Fraser's carriage horses, Scot third. The Derby was an easy win for Nizam, Buttercup second, but the Hack Race was a good one, the favorite, Kilmore, winning easily, and being bought afterwards for twelve hundred rupees by a confederacy composed of Rowland Hudson and some brother planters. The second night's lotteries were infinitely brisker than those held on the

first, and prospects for Thursday's racing looked excellent. For the Ticcree Cup Sir William was a hot favorite, bringing Rs. 630 to his lucky drawers. He won in a common canter, Hopeful, Hopeless and Dolly Varden only opposing him, the last-named merely going to the post. Then came a splendid race for the Arab Handicap, game little Anarchy beating Delawar and Crossbee. Ali Abdoola, when at Sonepore the year before, had persuaded the Behar boys to let him select some Arabs for them at Bombay, promising to give a purse of Rs. 400 for them to run for. The race brought out six decent pigstickers, racers they certainly were not; Rowland won on his own Amethyst, the only one with any turn of speed. The Planters' Purse was another good race, Mr. Mackellar's Barmaid beating Kilmore, his cast-off of the previous day; Black Eagle close up. Then Rowland steered Bob Wilson's honest mare Norah in winner of the Moorcroft Stakes; and so home to breakfast. Rattling good lotteries on Friday, Sir William, favorite for the Civilians' Cup, his rivals being Fisherboy and Barmaid. A tremendous field, for Sonepore, of nine for the second-class handicap, caused three lotteries to fill on it, favoritism being divided between Finette and Kilmore, latter for choice. In the Civilians' Cup Fisherboy beat the Dacca crack easily, a great feather for Jimmy's amateur training. Anarchy beat the handsome cur Saladin for the Durbangah Cup, and then Red Gauntlet, on whom Jimmy got a flying start, beat Norah, Canton-Sue, Barmaid and Driver for the Hajee-pore Stakes. That brute Driver bolted with Rowland; he was a sulky brute, and it was a mercy no one was ever killed by him. Diana, neatly ridden by Gilbert Nicolay, beat Bessie, Finch up, in the pony race, though had not the latter swerved at the whip when close home, she would have won. The starting during the day was atrocious, and in the big hack race it took half an hour to get the horses off; and then Vaudeville was left at the post. Kilmore, piloted by Dignum, just got

home in front of Jimmy on Black Eagle, Finette, third. Jimmy carried four pounds overweight, or the result might have been different, as the judge's verdict was a neck. Tuesday was to be a great day, for Wheal declared to start Mr. Maitland's Kingcraft against Fisherboy and Storm in the Free Handicap. It was a fine struggle, resulting in Finch on Kingcraft beating Fisherboy, who was in receipt of a stone, by a neck, same distance dividing Fisherboy from Storm. The Desert Stakes Anarchy won, and Sir William followed it up by appropriating the Doomraon Cup. Crossbee, with Jaffer to shove him along, won the Arab Handicap easily, beating a field of six, and then Red Gauntlet, with a native up, made all the running in the Second Class Handicap, and easily beat the favorite Kilmore, who had Rowland to steer him. On the last day Sonepore was honored by a visit from the new Viceroy Lord Northbrook, but he did not come with the pomp Lord Mayo did. He arrived just as the races were over, and was driven across from Bankipore by Messrs. Hodgkinson and Abercrombie, the bodyguard escorting him. He held a levee before breakfast, gave a most enjoyable ball, and left to see the young Maharajah at Durbhangah next morning, having made himself exceedingly popular. The Hutwa Cup Handicap stood Storm 9-2, Kingcraft 9-0, Fisherboy 7-4, and a great race it was, Kingcraft forced the pace, Fisherboy close up, Storm unable at first to travel with the young ones. At the mile and a half post Fisherboy caught the leader, and Storm was at their girths, but he fell back at the distance post, and Finch just got Kingcraft home by half a length from Fisherboy, Ramchurn having ridden the latter splendidly. Kilmore, ridden by Dignum, beat the favorite, Black Eagle, who, having Jimmy up, was made favourite for the Patna Stakes. Crossbee scored a neat win in the Chupra Stakes. Surprise won the Cabool Stakes, and Red Gauntlet the Hack Handicap, Jimmy steering both. Then Mr. Sherman had the satisfaction of seeing his pretty

Arab Ermine win the Pony Handicap. Among the features of this meeting was a memorable polo match, Chumparun *versus* The World. Chumparun won; the following competed:—World: Francis Murray, E. Macintosh, T. Fraser, R. Brown, E. Drummond and W. Llewhellin; Chumparun: J. J. McLeod, H. Fraser, R. Hudson, D. Reid, G. Nicolay and F. A. Shaw. How few of this fine lot of horse-men are now left among us. Of The World, Francis Murray, Toast Macintosh, Teddy Drummond and Tom Fraser have all retired, while poor Rudston Brown and Willie Llewhellin are dead. Of the Chumparunites Harry Fraser, Rowland Hudson, Donald Reid and Ferdy Shaw have gone home for good; but the veteran Jimmy is well to the fore, going as strong as ever, while Gilbert Nicolay is still with us. A sad event occurred at the end of 1874 in the death of that fine soldier and horseman Colonel James, who was killed by a fall when pigsticking in Lower Bengal.

After this Sonapore, Jimmy, Rowland Hudson, Gilbert Nicolay, Bob Crowdy, Apples, and one or two more Behar sportsmen went down to the Assensole Meeting, which was then being run by that fine old Engineer, Mr. John Whitty, who put them up in princely style. The purses were handsome and lotteries excellent. The Colliery Managers and Railway employés, who were the principal residents, were as keen on racing as possible, and though they did not own any Highborns or Stings, they were desperately excited over their one or two events, closed to local cracks. One anxious owner who had seen Gilbert perform the day before, asked him to ride; Gilbert said "Certainly," but when the mount was produced Gilbert was simply struck dumb, a more unkempt, ill conditioned, awful looking moke had never been brought upon a race course; there was the crack G.R. immaculately got up, and fancy his feelings at having to pass the grand stand on this atrocious hair trunk. However it was too late to refuse, and he sorrowfully led it away to the saddling shed. While tightening the girths, he overheard, through the

thin "tatti" partitions, the final instructions given to his only two opponents, each was told to wait on the other, Gilbert's chances of winning being utterly despised. The race was round the course. Gilbert quietly waited on the pair, that fine horseman Bob Crowdy on The Sweep being one of his opponents, the pace being funereal. About a quarter of a mile from home Gilbert put the spurs in, and the hair trunk answering gamely, ere the others woke up he had got home midst the tumultuous applause of the localites. The owner, a herculean Britisher, was simply beside himself with joy and made frantic efforts to pat Gilbert on the back, but a look at the brawny fist was enough for the slim 'un, and it was most laughable to watch him dodging away from these delicate intentions. "Thank you Surr," shouted the owner, "and you beat them fayer too." At the 1874 meeting a lot of good jockeys were present, Finch, Vinall, Dignum, Brewty, Gerard, Ryder and others. To while away the time during the idle part of the day the boys got up a match, to see who would color a newly bought meershaum pipe best and quickest during the meeting; five entered at twenty rupees each, and Gerard's pipe was so obviously in advance of the rest, that suspicions rose in the minds of the other competitors, so they set a watch on him, and caught the old rascal sitting on an inverted bucket behind the stables, diligently coloring the pipe over some burnt straw, so he was disqualified and little Finch eventually pouch-ed the hundred rupees.

CHAPTER XXI.

YEAR 1875.

The year 1875 was an eventful time for India, for it was the year of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' visit. Though it did not affect Sonepore much, yet it gave a grand opportunity to that most pompous of Civilians, Theophilus

Metcalf, to show his rare powers of organisation, and certainly the durbar held by him at Bankipore in honour of the Prince, was magnificently carried out. The most amusing part of the show was to see that mountebank Dicky Temple, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, jumping about like a big monkey, and teaching the planters how to bow, when they were before H.R.H. The Calcutta Turf Club had to regret the retirement during the previous season of two of the most respected of their body of stewards—honest Jim Crawford, who had been Collector of Customs for many years, and had generally acted as Judge at the Calcutta and Ballygunge Meetings, and Colonel Monty Turnbull. Both left with the cordial good wishes of their friends, who were legion. The Turf Club Stewards for the year were Lord Ulick Browne, the Nestor of the lot, Captain Ben Roberts, Remount Agent, one of the best judges of a horse that ever lived, Captain Biddulph, Mr. Charley Moore, to whom the Club owes much of late years for his careful thoughtfulness in framing rules, as well as his having been the chief factor in starting and keeping up the Tollygunge course. Mr. J. McLean had taken Mr. Crawford's post; and Captain Harry Peacock, a sportsman to the backbone, was Honorary Secretary. That Emperor of writers on all matters connected with the horse, Captain Horace Hayes, launched his first effort in literature this year, "A Guide to Horse Training and Management in India," than which a better book on the subject has never been penned. In the *Oriental Sporting Magazine* that year, General Turnbull writing from England, gave Mr. Hallen and his supporters a well-deserved rebuke, he said and truly, "The Indian Government have done all in their power to discourage horse breeding, they have smashed their studs instead of remodelling and improving them." For Sonapore the Stewards of 1875 were Messrs. Abercrombie, Arthur Butler, Fred Collingridge, Teddy Drummond, George Llewellyn, Colonels Shaw and Browne,



REMINISCENCES OF SONEPORE

and Lieutenant Kinchant of the 11th Hussars, George Porter again acting as Honorary Secretary. This was the first year when the racing was reduced to four days, and great was the commotion in consequence. In reality, as far as racing men went, it was the best thing. The prizes were not big enough to encourage an unlimited number of horses, and it got monotonous to see the same nags contesting over and over again. At the lotteries it was a case of dog eat dog. Socially it was in those days a bit early to cut down the ten days, for we had not so many meetings as nowadays, and the Sonepore Meeting was described alike in the *Pioneer*, *Englishman*, and sporting papers, as the pleasantest ten consecutive days to be spent in India. Kelly Maitland had the now almost invincible Kingcraft and the evergreen Crossbee. Mr. Covey (a Madras contractor named Bates) had that smart little horse Hunter, and the champion Arab Marquis. Ryder was again representing the Dacca Baboo, but had not nearly such a strong string as the year before; Anarchy alone facing the flag, but not scoring a single win. Brewty was in charge of Captain Davidson's string, including Dandynong, Red Hazard and the lanky countrybred Lord Evergreen. Dignum had now found his way to Tirhoot, and was training on his own account at Mozufferpore; he had with him old Red Gauntlet, Mr. Rainford's Pirate, the English horse Liberty by Blair Athol, and a lovely studbred mare called Slowcoach, belonging to Mr. Jones, the Kellner of Behar in those days. Bertie Short for the first and only time in his racing career, till he joined the staff of *The Planters' Gazette* in 1884, was there with Finette, whom he had purchased early in the year from Kelly Maitland. Great was the excitement amongst the natives to see Bertie ride with his one hand. Jimmy again had a tremendous stable, Fisherboy, Raven and Fieldfare being his best. Mr. Cresswell (Gwatkin Williams) had only a waler named Rabbit, no use at all. Polly Studd had a mad devil called Miseltoe, and this year was the first

appearance of another pig-headed brute, belonging to Jimmy, and which he had occasion to remember later on, the thrice accursed and well-named Bowrar Bill. The lotteries were poor throughout the meeting, and not only did local owners treat the Secretary rudely by not turning up at the specified time, but when they did, they were accompanied by a lot of people, who only came to talk and drink, and who made such a row that the legitimate business could not be properly conducted. As in those days the stupid plan was in vogue of taking starting declarations at the lotteries, no lotteries could be held till the local owners sauntered in at their own sweet will, and this had much to do with driving away outside owners and making the meeting bear the bad character which it took years to clear itself from, of being, as far as racing was concerned, "a family party arrangement." Perhaps things would have worked better had the declarations, as now, been taken at six o'clock, and the lotteries fixed for ten. This would have given local owners, many of whom were hosts and did not like to leave their guests till the ladies had left the dinner table, ample time, but these simple expedients did not seem to strike the Stewards, and so discontent was rife. Finette opened the ball by beating Hunter, Dandynong and Fieldfare in the Leger in very fast time. In the Derby Red Hazard had only to face a rotten local beast called The Boy, who broke a blood vessel, and was, of course, beaten. Two only, Roufette and Slowcoach, in the C.B. race, the former owned by Messrs. Arthur and John, won after a good race, and the day ended by Mr. Freeman's Florican, with Kelly Maitland up, winning the Behar Stakes. The second day's racing was not much superior to its predecessor, Kingcraft walked over for the Ticcree Cup, a stupidly conceived race of weight for inches. Crossbee won the Galloway race from the local duffers Spartia and Marigold. Marquis hard held, won the Durbhangah Cup from Anarchy and Red Hazard. Slowcoach won the Moorcroft Stakes from

a hack called Minnie, Roulette having bolted into the refreshment tent with Brewty. Hunter beat Finette in the Welter, and then came a Free Handicap for all horses bought for a thousand or under; seven started. Fieldfare, a hot favorite, ridden by Mr. Maitland, was beaten by Red Gauntlet, steered by Rowland Hudson; Miseltie bolted with Polly Studd and deposited that good-looking planter in a ditch, but no bones were broken. The third night's lotteries were infinitely brisker, the fields being large for all but the Hutwa Cup. Nothing but Fisherboy would face Kingcraft, and of course the former had no show. Marquis cantered home for the Desert Stakes, four behind him; and a fine race then was witnessed for the Hajeepore Stakes for countrybreds, Slowcoach winning by a neck from Lord Evergreen, the favorite; Morty, Roulette, Parody and Peutetre in the ruck. Then Jimmy appeared in the pigskin for the first time since his return from his first visit home, and a splendid race he rode on Gilbert Nicolay's Red Gauntlet, Gilbert on Jimmy's own Vaudeville; the result a dead heat, owners sensibly divided; long John Thomas' Raven third, half a length off. Then a pony race won by Tambourine finished Tuesday's racing. The last day gave good sport and the best lotteries of the meeting. Hunter won the Civilians' Cup from Finette and Fisherboy, and then came a splendid race for the Chupra Stakes, Crossbee, Marquis, Anarchy, Slowcoach and Morty competing. After a jostling finish Crossbee got home, Anarchy second, Marquis, the favorite, third. Then Raven in receipt of three stone ten from poor old Gauntlet, just beat him in the Champagne Stakes. Bob Wilson's Liberty won the selling race, and was bought by Mr. H. B. Simpson, still located at Bankipore. Crossbee won a second race from the same gallows he had beaten before. At a cricket match during the meeting Leonard Abbott, the Hajeepore Magistrate, who had been Captain of Cheltenham, carried out his bat for a century. Mrs. Porter looked after the decorations

and suppers splendidly. Mr. Fraser McDonell, though no longer Secretary, was there with his wife and pretty daughter, Mrs. Cecil Wilkins; and as the local scribe Specked Tater, wrote at the time, "There he stood with his honors, ever thick upon him, Chief too of his Clan, his family around him, to see one of whom in the saddle was alone worth going to Sonepore and yet he was as full of the thing, as when five and twenty years ago, he in black, and all black, used year after year to steer beautiful Beppo to victory. *Euge* well loved Little Mac." I need scarcely say Specked Tater alluded to Mrs. McDonell than whom no more accomplished lady rider ever graced the saddle, and she kept her nerve to the day she left India, which was long after she was a grandmother. Bob Crowdy was winning chases all over the country about this time; at Allahabad on Hermit he beat Captain Hemphreys on R. Y. in the Marden chase.

CHAPTER XXII.

YEAR 1876.

In 1876, Mr. Harry Alexander, the popular Civilian, who had married pretty Miss Sandes of Bhagalpore, and Colonel Auchinleck were, with Messrs. Butler, Geo. Llewhellin, F. Collingridge and Colonel Browne, the Stewards; Mr. Ralph Abercrombie, Honorary Secretary. A five days' programme was published, but the last only a sky affair. The change was much discussed, and drew from Fred Collingridge an agonised appeal to all concerned, to keep up the old ten days' fixture. The best bit of the letter was this: "*Rem acu tetigi* Sonepore's ten days were only too few, and we used always to extend them, but I fearlessly argue that if Sonepore is worth going to at all, it is worth going to for ten days; and that eight days are too short, either for the pleasure attained, or the trouble necessary to attain that pleasure. And if Sonepore is what it was, it *was* worth going five hundred

miles for, and the same back, when there was no Railway nearer than Europe, *Experte credo*." But he spoilt his letter by throwing all the blame on outside owners, whom he impolitely termed "Racing Buffers." This naturally led to recrimination, and did much to drive away those alluded to. As a matter of fact, it was want of funds which was crippling the management, the balls were beginning to get too expensive, and subscriptions not rising proportionately. Jimmy McLeod had had one of his periodical spills in September, and advertised his entire string for sale, but thought better of it, and brought them to Sonapore, and lucky for him he did so, for he virtually cleared the board. But the Meeting was much marred by heavy rain falling so late in October, that the racing had to be postponed, and consequently many horses were scratched, camps were smaller than usual, and the fair was entirely broken up before the racing started. John Wheal had, after the breaking up of Mr. Mullick's string, betaken himself to Jodhpore, where he not only was made Generalissimo of the stable, but a Field Marshall of the army. He brought down Prosperity, Pegasus, Crown Prince, Moss Trooper, Cockahoop, Red Eagle and Shickra; Finch was still his jockey. Ryder had Anarchy, and a beautiful new colt he had selected for the Baboo in Australia, called Newcastle, but which did not run at the meeting. Kelly Maitland had Finette, Crossbee, Petrel and that lovely chestnut pony Fleur-de-lys. Joe Rainford, with Dignum to train and Tingey to steer for him, had Kirby, much improved from last year, and Slipstone. These constituted the only outside stables; Jimmy had the great Fieldfare, this year in grand fettle, Geraldine the champion countrybred, Raven, Glengarry, Fisherboy, Pandora, Bowrar Bill, Snowdrop, Emma, Scot, Kilmore, Discontent, Red Gauntlet and a pony mare Sultana—not all his own, but trained at Lall Serryah. The only other Planters running anything at the meeting, were Mr. Charley Webb,

who had a pony called Skipper, and Harry Abbott, who had Kathleen and a galloway called Rocket of Mr. Namreh's. Poor lotteries the first night. Fieldfare won the Leger from Kirby, Prosperity and Pegasus, but she only got home a head, Anarchy walked over for the Derby; Geraldine beat her only opponent, Shickra, easily in the Tirhoot Stakes. Then Raven sailed home an easy winner for the Bettiah Cup, Glengarry, Fisherboy, Moss Trooper and Cockahoop in the ruck. Pandora walked over for the Behar Stakes, and Bowrar Bill, Jimmy up, won the Scurry; every race but one going to Lall Serryah. Only four races on Saturday, two farces, but two rattling good ones. The Hajeeapore Stakes brought out Kirby, Glengarry, General Lee, Fisherboy, Finette, Fieldfare and Prosperity; they finished as named; Kirby winning by only half a length; General Lee a neck behind, Fisherboy at his girths, a tremendous race. Fleur-de-lys won the Galloway Race in a canter from Flirt and Rocket. Then came another exciting struggle for the Durbangah Cup, Bowrar Bill, Pandora and Slipstone a head behind one another, and Snowdrop a neck behind them, Scot close up. Geraldine, 8st. 10lbs. with Ramchurn up; and Kathleen, 9st. 4lbs. Harry Abbott, in the saddle were the only runners for the Moorcroft Stakes, the chestnut winning easily. Tuesday showed poor sport, only Fisherboy and Glengarry, with the two native stable boys up, went out for the two mile Ticcree Cup, a pretty race at the finish, Fisherboy winning by a neck; they only cantered till they reached the three-quarter mile post. Red Eagle walked over for the Hutwa Cup; Anarchy won the Hutwa Stakes from Geraldine, Kathleen and Shickra. The Chumparun Stakes brought out five, all from the Lall Serryah stable, Fieldfare won easily. Sultan had no difficulty in winning the Pony Race from Skipper. On the last day fields were small. The Civilians' Cup resolved itself into a duel between the stable companions Glengarry and Fieldfare, the

native boys up again; Glengarry, who belonged to Dr. Roderick McLeod, won after a slashing finish by a neck. Geraldine, in receipt of three stone, beat Anarchy a length in the Chupra Stakes; Snowdrop beat Pandora and Bowrar Bill in the Champagne Stakes. Flirt, Finch up, beat Rocket in the Galloway Handicap, and then Kathleen had a win in the Buggy Stakes, beating Scot, Morty and No Name. Fred Collingridge acted as starter throughout the meeting. Baby Canning made his *début* at this meeting; he was an awful grif, but very sporting; he bought Kathleen in the lotteries and after everyone had gone to bed, Harry Abbott was roused by a man with a letter from the Baby, who requested that the mare Kathleen, which he had bought, be made over to the bearer. Harry's language can be imagined. It was about this time that Bob Crowdy was proving himself such a grand cross-country rider, and it was always a matter of regret that Sonepore saw so little of him and his sporting brothers; Clarges Ruxton was also distinguishing himself as a bold and good horseman.

CHAPTER XXIII.

YEAR 1877.

For 1877 Messrs. Albert Mangles, Paddy Hudson and Jimmy McLeod were added to the stewards' list, "Bicrom" still acting as Secretary. The Meeting opened on the 15th, but a gloom had been cast over it by the sad accident ten days previously at Barrackpore to poor Alf. Abbott, who was killed while riding Woolloomaloo in the Pony Hurdle Race, won by Jimmy McLeod's Sultan, ridden by Dewing, Dr. Spooner Hart and Mr. Ruxton riding in the same race. Behar could boast of few stronger or pluckier riders than Alf. was; and it was only the previous month's *Oriental Sporting Magazine* that contained the record of his having at various times ridden down nine wolves, single-handed, a probably

unequalled feat. Our queer-voiced Madras friend, Mr. Bates, *alias* Covey, turned up again at Sonapore, bringing the Arabs Marquis and Caractacus, as well as the handsome chestnut Australian Telegram. Ryder had Newcastle, Lincoln, the evergreen Anarchy and Gazelle. Gwatkin Williams had a fine bay Australian Emigrant, Zephyr and the country-bred pony Goldmohur, belonging to Jim Bourdillon. The Messrs. Crowdy had the old English cripple Dolly Varden, their crack country-bred mare Deception, and a pony called Fairy Queen. Jimmy had his usual big string, Fieldfare, Gleggarry, Bill, Shamrock, May, Snowdrop, Bowrar Bill, Geraldine, Stampede, Gameboy and Red Gauntlet. Couzens, the jockey, had Cardigan, the greatest Arab of the day, Lady Ald, Cantator and the pony Godfrey. Rainford, the contractor, had Liberty, Slipstone, Maid of All Work and the pony Pearl. Harry Abbott naturally wanted to scratch his horses, but on its being pointed out that the countrybred races would fall through if he did so, ran them. He had Kathleen, Spider, Slowcoach, Rocket and Black Diamond. Kathleen was a clean bred filly, whose dam, Rosa Doretta by Bay Middleton, had been bought at home for the Indian stud; she had been covered by Prince Plausible, a son of the famous King Tom, but was thought not to have held. A week after landing she threw a filly foal, a terrible weed, which was rejected as a yearling, and sold at Bankipore to Dr. Lethbridge's old bearer for forty rupees. She afterwards fell into the hands of a Chumparun planter, who gave her to Jimmy McLeod to train, but he thought her too slight to stand racing. She then was sold to Mr. Fred Atkinson, who was checking accounts in the Tirhoot famine. He ran her at the Mozufferpore Meet, riding himself and she got third to Sweetheart. Harry Abbott, who had steered the latter, had a shrewd idea Kathleen was a clinker, and got Mr. Fred to enter her again to meet all the cracks in the open race for C.B.'s and let him ride her. He bought

her in three lotteries, on an average of Rs. 10, and won easily. He then took her on racing terms, eventually buying her, and many were the close finishes at the Behar Meets between her and Geraldine; she was a rare plucked one, for she would struggle home frequently to victory, after having burst a blood vessel. Spider was a huge sixteen-hand country-bred, picked up by a Mr. Christian of Purneah for a hundred and fifty rupees, and lent to George Sherman, who sent him on to Harry who afterwards bought him. He was all head and bones, a rat tail not adding to his beauty. *Dhan* had formed his staple food in Purneah; but he turned out a very fast one, and had his wind not gone, just as he was getting fit, he would have been a champion in his class. Judex Simpson had the 'little pony Mouse, and also the last of Frank Vincent's Barh country-breds, which he sold off during the meeting. For twenty years Frank Vincent had successfully bred horses on the south side of the Ganges, and as long as he used Crassus as a sire, he did well, but when he got hold of the handsome flatcatcher Birdcatcher, most of the foals were peacocks. Events opened with a splendid race for the Leger, between Telegram, Lincoln and Emigrant, Telegram winning by a neck only. An equally good race for the Derby between Anarchy, Marquis and Cardigan, the little one winning by a head; Cardigan same distance behind Marquis. An awful upset occurred in the Tirhoot Stakes, for which Caractacus was a hot favorite, for the fiddleheaded, much laughed at Spider won by twenty lengths; everyone crowding round to look at him when he came in. The field pulled up at the distance post, the jockeys being too flabbergasted to persevere. The Bettiah Cup, although only like the Leger and Derby having three starters, was a grand struggle between Newcastle and Fieldfare, result a neck, Glengarry beaten off. Bill, a dead outsider, neatly ridden by Gilbert Nicolay, beat Jimmy on the favorite Shamrock for the Behar Stakes; and this finished an uncommonly good day's racing, only to

be eclipsed by that of Saturday, which opened with the Durbangah Cup, four starters, Snowdrop, Bowrar Bill, Shamrock and Bill. The Bowrar one was favorite, particularly as Jimmy was up ; he made hot running, but Ryder caught him at the finish and landed Snowdrop a head in front. Telegram won the Hajeepore Stakes from Fieldfare and Glengarry, the mare a hot favorite. Then ten stripped for the Galloway Stakes and a tremendous finish took place between Ryder on Couzen's Gazelle and Tingey on Harry Abbott's Black Diamond, the grey winning by half a length. Another great race for the Moorcroft Stakes ; the four starters at the lotteries sold as follows :—Geraldine, Rs. 220 ; Slowcoach, Rs. 150 ; Kathleen, Rs. 50 ; Spider, Rs. 60. Spider made running, but at the half mile all joined issue, and Tingey on Kathleen beat Geraldine a head. Nine stripped for the Selling Stakes, and all were glad to see the Messrs. Crowdy score a win with Dolly Varden. No more racing that day. In this race occurred an accident which completely upset everyone. Jimmy was riding Bowrar Bill, who rushed away to the front, pulling and hanging like a fiend ; coming round the corner, the brute ran Jimmy's leg crash into the distance post, smashing the knee cap, but Jimmy not only did not faint or fall off, but rode out the finish resolutely, and 'twas not till all pulled up that the other riders or spectators knew he was injured. Even when they took him off his horse and carried him to his tent, he never uttered a moan, though the pain must have been excruciating. He kept up his spirits wonderfully, and all he grumbled at was when the doctor said he must be sent home. On Tuesday Telegram won the Ticcaree Cup easily from Glengarry, Newcastle and Fieldfare ; Marquis did the same in the Lutwa Cup, the country-breds not in it. Snowdrop won the Chumparun Stakes after a good race with May ; six started. Psyche beat the local ponies easily, and Emigrant won the Welter. On the last day the Chupra Stakes brought out six

good looking country-breds. Deception was served up very warm at the lotteries, but was the first beaten in the race. Harry's three ran a ding dong finish, Kathleen getting home first, followed by Spider and Slowcoach. Mr. Crowdy was recompensed for Deception's failure by Dolly Varden's beating three others in the Champagne Stakes. Gazelle easily won the Galloway Handicap, though to everyone's astonishment the despised Rocket ran second. Gameboy finished the meeting by winning the Doomraon Cup, Jimmy watching the race from under the *kanauts* of his tent.

The year 1877 was the hottest Sonepore on record; the heat under canvas was too awful for words. The fair was a poor one. Ali Abdoola bought a lot of country-breds for Bombay remounts. Sir Ashley Eden, then Lieutenant-Governor, was present and made himself very agreeable, doing all that was nice, giving a ball, and altogether the meet was successful. Horace Cockerell, who could speak well, proposed Mr. Abercrombie's health at the Lieutenant-Governor's ball; and then everyone rose to drink with Highland honors the toast proposed by Mr. Abercrombie, that of Mr. Fraser McDonell; how the glasses did rattle in his honor! The chief winners over the meeting were Mr. Covey and Harry Abbott, for the latter's representative backed bonny Kathleen in every lottery.

When Jimmy smashed his knee cap, he did not own Bowrar Bill, as he had sold him half an hour previously to Elphick, the Veterinary-Surgeon. The horse had been entered for two races that day, the last being a selling race, and Jimmy remarked at the lotteries he would not start in the second if he went lame after the first one, which was very probable, as he had a heavy weight to carry and always played the fool and knocked himself about. Elphick thought this was only "kid," so that Jimmy might buy the brute cheap in the lottery; so he bid for and bought him himself at a biggish

figure, Jimmy not claiming any share. Jimmy piloted Bowrar Bill in the first race, got in second to Snowdrop, but sure enough the horse pulled up dead lame, and the Stewards said he need not start for the Selling Race. Even this did not satisfy the suspicious Vet, who sneeringly observed "Oh he's always lame." Jimmy merely answered, "You lie, he's never been lame before, if you want to start the horse, buy him." Elphick swallowed the affront and eagerly said "How much." "A thousand rupees," said Jimmy. "Done," said Elphick, but no one, either professional or amateur, would ride such a mad tearing devil, and Elphick was far too faint-hearted to get up himself, so he came whining to Jimmy and coaxed him to ride. The poor horse, was in such pain, that twice in the race he got off the course on to the softer going in the field, and it was in trying to avoid the distance post the accident occurred. Elphick had a bad bargain, for he was only able to bring Bowrar Bill once to the post, and that in a match in Calcutta, which he lost, and a ticca gharry was the poor beast's eventual fate.

CHAPTER XXIV.

YEAR 1878.

Just before the meeting of 1878 came off, the Jaintpore Stable was very nearly being a thing of the past, for its master was as close on being welcomed by old Clooty instead of filling our races, as he well could be. He had another narrow squeak this time, through handling a snake of the krait species, which is so deadly that there is a native saying about it that after its bite, it does not give the patient time to drink water.

The scene of this adventure, a narrator of the occurrence writing to the *Civil and Military Gazette* says, was at Jaintpore. "Abbott looked upon all snakes as 'warmint,' to be killed at sight, but his way of doing it was unique. His ordinary custom, whenever he came across them, was to pick them up by the tails and dash their heads against the ground.

"There was undoubtedly a certain amount of excitement in this, which added zest to the sport; a case of, 'perhaps he bites, perhaps he don't.' On this occasion the bite came off, the snake died. A man who had ridden and lassoed an alligator was not to have his star blotted out by a vile reptile like a snake.

"On the eventful night in question, a brilliant moonlight one by-the-bye, we had all retired to the arms of Morpheus. I was awoken by what I took at first for a ghost, and understood that Harry (whom everyone in India knows means Abbott) had been bitten by a snake. A galvanic shock could not have had a greater effect.

"The first thing I saw was Abbott violently sick on the edge of the verandah. I then ascertained that he had been bitten between the middle fingers by a snake, the marks of the teeth being most distinct. There was no doubt about it, a couple of minutes had elapsed since the bite, but in the meantime he had tied two ligatures on his arm, one at the wrist and one on the forearm; had also taken a dose of medicine, which, curious to say, a lady had sent a few days previously, vouching for its efficacy in snake-bite. It was evidently, from its strong smell, composed with a good deal of ammonia, and should have been taken with oil. In the excitement, the first dose or two was given neat with the result that the poor patient lost all the skin off his tongue, which made him remark that the cure was worse than the bite. Determined to leave nothing undone, I promptly got a razor and giving a couple of cross cuts over the bites, dropped on some raw carbolic acid. I can quite bear out the statements that Abbott is a man of nerve, or without nerves; he never flinched in the slightest under the operation, and as far as he himself was concerned, treated the whole thing as rather a joke than otherwise, right through the trying ordeal.

"After the cauterization I took his arm, and, getting one of the servants, whom I believe is the same man who pulled him out of the river in the alligator adventure, to take the other arm, I trotted him up and down the verandah at a brisk pace, stopping at the table midway to give him an occasional dose of the medicine according to the instructions as well as some strong tots of brandy which also played no small part in the eventual cure. He seemed to be getting on all right, and as nearly an hour had elapsed I had great hopes of his recovery, when all of a sudden he became very heavy in hand, and we could no longer keep him going. We were afraid it was all over now, but I promptly went for the brandy bottle and gave him a real knock-me-down peg, caught him by the arm, and shouted to him to do his best; it was like calling on the favourite at the winning post. The old horse responded, and after half dragging him for a few yards, he shook off the lethargy, and in five minutes disdained all assistance, and began cutting capers on his own account.

"The crisis was now evidently passed, but still we kept trotting him up and down the verandah, till at last he claimed a rest. He had done enough sprinting for that night. He now wanted the ligatures removed, as his hand was paining him very much. We would not hear of this, but allowed a native cupper, who turned up most opportunely from the crowd with his instrument, to work his wicked will. The cupping seemed to give relief, and afterwards, when some hours had elapsed, and we considered all danger had passed, we allowed the wrist ligature to be untied and after a short time the other one. Then the day began to break and the snake was brought forward on view. It was a fine krait, measuring four feet, and is still to be seen at Jaintpore, preserved in a prune jar filled with real old Scotch whisky, and is to be handed down with the rest of the heirlooms of the Abbott family. Within an hour of the bite a crowd of over

two hundred must have collected outside the verandah. The talk of some of those would-be wiseacres was highly amusing. One of them asked if the snake was alive. On being told that the Sahib had killed it, he shook his head; there was no hope. Another pinched Abbott's arm where the ligature was tied and asked him if he felt it. On being told no, he also shook his head; there was no hope, the Sahib must die; a regular Job's comforter this. A charmer then came forward, and wanted to exercise his blandishments, but we cried enough, and the charmer retired; he also shook his head.

"I have not yet stated the way in which the bite occurred. It appears that shortly after retiring Abbott heard the punkahwallahs call out, 'Samp! Samp!'. He was up at once like a terrier at a rat, and, going outside, saw Mr. Snake 'by the light of the moon.' Making use of his old tactics, he, as he thought, made a grab at its tail, which, however, turned out to be its head; hence this tale. Moral: Don't trust the moon, and don't catch snakes by the tail, or you may not get off so lightly as the hero of the alligator adventure."

In 1878 we miss from the list of the names of patrons that of Mr. Richardson, Judge of Mozufferpore, whose retirement from the service deprived Sonapore of one of its staunchest supporter. Good old "Doleful Dick" was one of the fine old Haileybury lot of Civilians, now alas nearly extinct. In mentioning his approaching departure, the sporting correspondent of the *Englishman* thus alludes to him:—"I am indeed sorry we are about to lose our judge, Mr. Richardson, who has for many years figured as one of our Stewards; his place will be hard to supply; he leaves Mozufferpore regretted universally by both Europeans and natives, a most perfect host, a true and kind-hearted English gentleman, one who never made an enemy, a staunch friend and a very prince of good fellows, his memory will be green with us for many years to come, and we can only wish him

and his a sorrowful farewell and hearty God speed." This was penned over nineteen years ago, and every word then written can still be endorsed. If Dick Richardson had been less hospitable, he would have retired a wealthier man than he did; and doubtless when he reads the accounts of the present Sonapore and Mozufferpore meetings, he can recall many a happy episode at those fixtures during his Indian career. Mr. Abercrombie was still Secretary.

Although the entries showed a falling off on the part of outside owners, yet Jodhpore was well represented by Rajah Tej Singh, accompanied by John Wheal, who had with him a lovely black Australian filly called Joan of Arc, Orlando, and the Arabs Aleppo and Wicked. Captain Humphreys, the celebrated cross-country rider, had Fair Nell, Exeter and the mighty Nimrod. Kelly Maitland had that sweet mare Haidee, Kushroo, Fleur-de-lys and the champion Kingcraft. Jaffir had Thisbee and Merry Lass; Couzens, the jockey, had the crack Arab of the day Cardigan, and the C.B. Lady Ald; Ryder had Lord Bill Beresford's galloway Snake, Baboo Mohiny Mohun Dass' Saracen, Telegram, Stanley and Lancer. Jimmy McLeod, now quite recovered from his accident, had Fieldfare, Shamrock, Isabel, Widow, Snowdrop, Skelbo, Dennis, Red Gauntlet, Glengarry, Empress, Mercedes, Sultan and Gameboy. Harry Abbott had the twenty-year-old screw Echo, the broken-winded Spider, a big hot-headed Australian filly called Talkaway, bought from Dr. Morgan for the Behar Stakes, Fraulein, the last of Mr. Vincent's Barh country-breds, Peeress, a handsome grey Australian, pretty little North Star, and Black Diamond. The meeting commenced miserably, it rained for the first twenty-four hours unceasingly. The morning's races opened in drizzle. Joan of Arc had an exercise canter to beat Sprite for the Leger, and then a disgraceful pull of Cardigan in the Derby by Couzens, allowed Saracen to win; no notice being taken of it

by the Stewards, though Mr. McGrath, the plucky little Civilian, denounced it in no unmeasured words. A good race for the Tirhoot Stakes, resulted in Ryder on Widow beating Jaffir on Merry Lass, a length; and then came the Bettiah Cup, supposed to be a moral for Kingcraft, but in a villainous start he got left and failed to catch Fieldfare, who won comfortably, a lucky win for Jimmy. Then came the Behar Stakes, only three starters, Shamrock, Talkaway and Skelbo. Tingey, who was riding for the stable, asked Mr. Abbott to put up Ryder, as he was afraid of not being able to hold Talkaway. Opposite the stand, she, while leading, bored off the course, but Ryder got her back again, then the other two joined her; undoubtedly a bump occurred, but from this the mare came away, and, never headed again, won easily. An objection was lodged, and on hearing the evidence of Messrs. McLeod and Hudson, the Stewards held, much to everyone's astonishment, that the jostle had interfered with the result of the race, and so they disqualified Talkaway. The rain cleared up towards evening, but the day's proceedings had given plenty of topics for gossip, and so the time did not hang heavily, as it otherwise might have done. Saturday was not a Jubilee day for the Lall Serryah stable, as they did not pull off a single event. Jimmy did not expect Fieldfare to repeat her performance and beat Kingcraft at evens in the Hajepore Stakes, so he sensibly refrained from backing her. The champion won easily. Mr. Maitland followed this up by piloting Fleur-de-lys home in front of Snake, Black Diamond and Bramah-Koond for the Galloway Stakes. Then Spider easily disposed of Denis and Widow in the Moorcroft Stakes. Now came a terrible upset, Glengarry was made a hot favourite for the Selling Race, but the winner turned up in the ancient Echo, who, unbacked by his owner and finding the soft going suited his unsound pins, won easily by two lengths. More unpleasantness at the lotteries on Monday.

When the handicaps were read out, it was seen that in the Chumparun Stakes Talkaway was asked to concede Shamrock twenty-one pounds, although they had not met since the Behar Stakes, for which the weights were Talkaway 11st. 2lbs., Shamrock 10st. 11lbs., *i.e.*, a difference of five pounds. Of course she was scratched. To have been in harmony with their decision of disqualification, the Stewards should have handicapped the gelding as the better horse at the previous weights; but with delicious inconsistency they stultified themselves painfully. Yet once more did the uncertainty of the turf show itself, for ignoring Echo's performance in the selling race, they allotted him the nice weight of 8st. 7lbs. and the old horse, with Tingey to steer him, squandered his field. North Star pulled off the Lilliputian Stakes. Mr. D. B. Allen made a good thing by Echo, for both on this and the previous day, he backed him, chiefly because Harry Abbott wouldn't. Captain Humphey on Nimrod beat Spider, Lady Ald and Red Gauntlet in the Welter. On the fourth day a hurdle race was improvised, Exeter and Gameboy only started; it was a farce, due to the stupidly small hurdles, through which Exeter galloped, and his turn of foot enabled him to beat Gameboy, who fenced honestly. Fieldfare won the Civilians' Cup from Thisby and Snowdrop, Merry Lass beat Fraulein and Widow in the Chupra Stakes, none of the heavy-weights accepting. Talkaway in the handicap for the Champagne Stakes was now asked to concede 2st. 7lbs. to Shamrock, presumably because her owner had declined to meet the gelding at 1st. 7lbs. in the Chumparun Stakes. She was again scratched, and her owner once more riled. Shamrock got home, Echo second; Glengarry beaten off. Harry Abbott's Black Diamond, the only acceptor for the Galloway Handicap, walked over. So ended a not altogether pleasant race meeting. Many of the up-country sportsmen, disgusted with the weather and want of accommodation, left after the second day's racing, notably Maharajah

Tej Singh of Jodhpore, who cleared out with Aleppo, Orlando and Wicked. Then Wheal went off with Joan of Arc ; and Telegram, Stanley and Lancer were also taken away. In those days no attempt was made by the Stewards to make outside owners comfortable, no Framji with tents and a decent *table d'hote* was provided for them. If they turned up they had to live in the tatti stables with their horses and arrange for their catering as best they could. Small wonder that this want of thought for others made outsiders fight shy of the meeting, and from this year Sonepore's reputation as a hospitable race meeting to outside owners declined. Socially it was as brilliant and jolly as ever. The 65th was at Dinapore then, and the Officers turned up at the meeting in force, and beat the planters at polo, owing chiefly to having bigger ponies.

CHAPTER XXV.

YEAR 1879.

The *Asian* came into existence in October 1878, and the *Oriental Sporting Magazine* shortly afterwards (in September 1879) expired, having till then been for over a quarter of a century, the only record of Indian Sport. The look out for the prospects of 1879 seemed poor, and in September of that year the *Assan* wrote :—

“ Can it be true that we shall have the sad task of writing ‘Ichabod’ about the once largely-frequented Sonepore Meet? We hear that it is more than probable the races this year will fall to the ground, the reasons alleged being that up to date there have been but very few applications for camps, and that therefore it seems doubtful whether the amount of subscriptions, sufficient to cover the expenses, will be raised. The cause of the falling off of applications for camps is probably the disastrous season the indigo planters of Behar have experienced.

“ Of all meets in India, Sonepore should be the most popular ; and we cannot but think that a little energy on the part

of the Stewards might yet rescue it from extinction, for even supposing the subscriptions of the European visitors should fall short, the fair is invariably frequented by all the wealthy zemindars and bankers of Patna, Mozufferpore and Chupra, and from these gentlemen alone, subscriptions might surely be raised sufficient to meet the probable deficit.

"The sporting Gya Stewards had managed to raise in a much poorer district, Rs. 5,000, and it will be a great slur on the present management if Sonepore is allowed to fall through simply from insufficient funds. Few native gentlemen care to come forward to offer subscriptions, but they seldom, if ever, refuse when solicited."

The want of good management spread to Mozufferpore as well, and there seemed no one bold enough to volunteer to act as Secretary; up to September no programme was issued, and the *Asian* asked "What are the Mozufferpore Stewards about, that there is no prospectus yet published? We hope that this meet is not likely to fall through."

The *Asian* was, however, wrong in its premises, it was not want of funds, but the poor prospects of the racing that paralyzed the executive. Outsiders would not enter, and Harry Abbott had advertised all his horses for sale, as the Mozufferpore Stewards would not lower their scale to Calcutta weight for age and class, a change for which he had been clamouring for years, but eventually they met his views, peace reigned once more, and he took up the Honorary Secretaryship, which he held almost continuously till he left the district.

The constant Jaffir was the only outsider who responded to the programme put forth by the Stewards for the Sonepore of 1879, and the racing was virtually a three-cornered duel between the rival local stables of Messrs. John, Cresswell and Abbott, the latter got over his pique and brought a decent lot—Talkaway, who had by this time an almost unprecedented record of winning brackets, a neat little filly called Vantage, old

Echo, more infirm than ever, Blue Bell, whom he was training for Norman McLeod, better known as "Finn Macoul," Black Diamond, the ever-green Spider, old Kathleen, whose racing days ended at this meeting, Pendragon and Gamecock. Jimmy had Fieldfare, Mercedes, Doleful, Rufus, Snowdrop, Panmuir, Widow, Mill May and Denis. Gwatkin Williams had B. Sharp, a host in himself; Jaffer had Thisbe and Aleppo, and Ryder, Gazelle; these constituted the starters. Vantage won the Leger, and Harry Abbott on Gamecock won the Derby, Denis then diversified matters by appropriating the Tirhoot Stakes. Talkaway romped home for the Bettiah Cup, beating Fieldfare, Raven and B. Sharp. Rowland Hudson on Mercedes and Jimmy on Doleful then fought out a close race for the Behar Stakes, result a dead heat and owners divided. Thisbe beat Snowdrop, Panmuir and Echo in the Selling Stakes, and was claimed and bought by Harry Fraser. On the second day Blue Bell, in receipt of ten pounds, got home for the Hajeeapore Stakes Handicap, after a tremendous race with her stable-companion Talkaway, Fieldfare beaten off. Mill May collared the Galloway Stakes, Spider beat his old opponent Geraldine in the Moorcroft Stakes, and Harry Abbott scored a third win with Pendragon in the Selling Race. On the third day little B. Sharp got home in the Durbangah Cup due chiefly to Ryder on Fieldfare and Tingey on Talkaway despising him; waiting on each other they let Jaffir get too far away, and when they tried to catch him, it was too late. The win was most popular. Aleppo beat Gamecock in the two mile Hutwa Cup, Blue Bell walked over for the Chumparun Stakes, and Mercedes won the Welter, beating Harry Abbott on Conemara, a desperate puller, who, in two previous false starts had bolted, and each time completed the course ere he could be stopped. Conemara was the property of the sporting Mess Sergeant of the 65th, Jim Hard, and great was the delight of the Tommies to see their representative figure

so well ; he must have won but for the false starts. It was about this year that " Skipper " Wilkinson, whose Hindustani was always lamentably weak, made a match to ride his yellow countrybred against another planter's moke, and before he got into the saddle he wanted to impress upon his syce that if he won he'd give him a present ; what he did say was " Ugger him girengey hum tum ko buxis dengey." The syce knowing how *very* careful his master was of his own car-case, consolingly made answer " Koch dhur nahin saheb ap zeroor bachhengey." On the last day Blue Bell beat Vantage and Fieldfare in the Civilians' Cup. Denis got home in front of Geraldine and Gamecock for the Doomraon Cup, Snowdrop won the Champagne Stakes, and Master Jaffir won a selling race with Thisbee, now in the Lall Serryah stable. At the end of the year the minds of old patrons of the meeting were still seriously exercised as to future prospects, as the following letter in the *Asian* shows :—

"DEAR SIR,—As a Soneporite of sixteen years standing, allow me to enter a mild protest against the idea you encourage in your paper of the 9th instant, *viz.*, that Sonepore is on the decline, and has seen its best day. The primary object of the meeting is to enable the residents of Behar to come together after the tedious enforced retirement of the hot weather, and to dispel dull care by a happy reunion with their friends from a distance. The last meeting, as far as I could learn, was considered, in a social point of view, to be one of the pleasantest held for years, as indeed your friend allows. Unforeseen and unavoidable accidents, together with the uncommonly rich prospectus offered at Hyderabad, helped to swell the list of absent owners and horses, but considering how few of the latter there were, if close finishes are any criterion, the racing was above the average. Next year I trust we shall see the colours of the Maharajah of Durbangah borne to the front by a horse worthy of a nobleman who behaved so handsomely this year when the meeting was on

the eve of dissolution ; and we must also look to Cooch Behar, who is a sportsman every inch, and worthy of the imitation of his brother chiefs. Talkaway's owner will then find foemen worthy of his steel, and if he takes my advice he will stick to a good horse when he gets him, as in these days of failures he will find it safer than the bank or even an old established agent.

"SAM SLICK."

It was at this or one of the meetings before or a little later on, that Charley Webb cured an atheist. The chap was a brother of a leading Civilian, but was a good deal tabooed, being an arrant snob in addition to having such peculiar ideas of religion. Charley took him for a drive one evening with his celebrated team of mules. The youth started giving Charley the full benefit of his disbelief of the existence of the Deity. Never a word said the driver, but all of a sudden he wheeled the mules round and sent them full dash across country. In front loomed a huge ditch and bank. "What are you at," shrieked the terrified atheist. "Going to see if they'll jump this ditch," lisped Charley in his quiet voice, but putting the whip smartly across the mules. "For God's sake don't," yelled the unbeliever. "Oh you do believe in God after all, do you," said Charley. And in another second the whole concern was heels upwards in the ditch. Charley picked himself up and calmly proceeded to extricate the mules from the *debris*, and, taking no notice of the groaning wretch, walked back to camp and all he said on arrival was, "I've converted the atheist, I think." At any rate, we had no more of the youth's blasphemies and he left the camp next day.

CHAPTER XXVI.

YEAR 1880.

Early in 1880 that good little mare Blue Bell left the Jaintpore stable, having been purchased by poor Peter Richards the Indigo Planter of Midnapore, a good and straight sports-

man, now alas no more. Talkaway had broken down and been bought for the Lall Serryah stud by Jimmy McLeod, poor old Echo had joined the majority, having come to his death in a most terrible way. Harry Abbott, who had gone to the Gya meeting straight from Calcutta, sent instructions to his trainer, Robinson, to bring some of his horses from Jaintpore to Gya. Robinson took all those likely to be wanted, but left old Echo, not thinking he'd stand the long march of seventy miles. The old horse, who was in a big tatti loose box by himself, hearing the others clear out, got into a terrible state of excitement at being left behind, and started neighing and running round the box, tearing at the bamboos with his teeth, in his anxiety to get out and follow them. Up to the bungalow rushed a pestilential servant and yelled out to Mrs. Abbott that Echo had gone mad, and would tear down the stable and be loose in a few minutes; to call her children into the house, and barricade all the doors was only the work of a few minutes. "Shoot him," she said to the servant, "before he can get out and bite anyone." Away went the slave, and the only weapon available was an old muzzle loader gun, some native powder was rammed in, and a lot of pice used in place of bullets; a hole made through the tatti, and about four shots at intervals were fired, till the poor brute dropped, shrieking in his death agony.

The old horse's pedigree is worth recording:—

Echo was a chestunt, bred at the Cape by Alexander Vanderbyl from the thoroughbred English horse Saraband. His dam was either by Emilius or Young Saddler, both T. B. E.'s, and her dam ran back to Lord Charles Somerset's Irish mare which he imported into the Cape as a two-year-old. Echo could not gallop a bit, and he was thrown out of training into a large paddock where he was a source of amusement to everyone, for he appeared half cracked; he used to pick up sticks in his mouth, take them into a corner and make a pile

of them ; sometimes he would trot round and round with his head against his flank for half an hour at a stretch ; he would run after crows or other birds that alighted in the paddock, chasing them with his mouth wide open ; in fact, his antics were far more like those of a puppy than a colt. After about a year he was put into training again, and although he occasionally showed speed, yet he developed so much temper that he was sold to Jack Thomas, a famous jockey and trainer down there, for twelve or fifteen guineas ; Jack Thomas at that time hunted the Cape hounds, and used to take Echo out regularly with the pack, soon getting him quite handy and quiet. Seeing after a bit that he could do almost anything with him, and also noticing he had a decided turn of speed, Thomas added Echo to the string he was then training, and the colt steadily improved. He ran well up in one race and was then allowed to lie by for another season, after which he was brought out as a five-year-old, when he won two races out of four starts at the Cape Town races, two out of four at Malmesbury, and one or two other races at smaller meetings. The following year he cleared everything before him and was scarcely, if ever, beaten ; all distances seemed alike to him, one mile, or two and a half, they crushed him with weight but he never seemed to mind it, and with Thomas on his back was simply invincible. As in his latter days, he was an awfully lazy horse in training, and the boy on his back used to have to literally flog him for three hundred yards ere he would go faster than a trot ; he was so sleepy and lazy that he hardly ever went out to exercise without falling down once or twice ; and one day, when being led from his stable to the race course, a distance of about a mile, on one occasion with two men leading him and a small boy on his back he fell twice, and then won his race two miles, with ten stone seven up giving everything else twelve pounds and more. Nobody would send their mares to him when he was advertised for the stud, as he was such a bad hack, and

breeders did not like his color, a mealy chestnut, so he went to India. Of his career here in the hands of Colonel Carey, Mr. Macallister and Mr. Lethorn under the skilful care and pilotage of Ryder and Dignum, the *Oriental Sporting Magazine* and *Asian's* columns told of many a good race gallantly won, and afterwards at Jaintpore his wondrous constitution and pluck enabled him even at the green old age of twenty and twenty-one, when his knees really were bowed out level with his toes, to show that there was life in the veteran yet. Few sounder, pluckier or more successful horses have ever been imported into India than the Cape horse Echo. Second perhaps to Mr. Maitland's Kingcraft, but certainly to none other up to this epoch.

In spite of doleful prognostications, the Sonepore gathering promised to be a good one, as Colonel Money, now in charge of the Durbangah Raj, signified that the Maharajah would be present and give a big camp, as well as a Cup of Rs. 1,000 to the races. The festive Bob Lockhart, then an eligible bachelor, with George St. Aubyn Nixon, ran a quiet Chupra camp just behind the ball room, which was a very useful *rendezvous* for those whose fervent worship of Bacchus rendered the finding of their tents a matter of difficulty. Jimmy McLeod had a big camp in the corner, Gwatkin Williams, Albert Mangles, Anthony Patrick MacDonnell, Colonel Money, the 65th Regiment, Steuart Bayley and Harry Abbott, besides several smaller fry, all had camps. Jock Harvey, Manager of Paikpara and owner of the mighty Palmerston, and the brothers T. and A. A. Apar, were guests of Harry. Major Ben Roberts, who was acting as Mentor to Durbangah, was a guest of Colonel Money's, as was Mr. Fraser McDonell. The racing was again confined to the local stables, though they were all, save Mr. Cresswell's, greatly improved; the latter gentleman had sold B. Sharp to the Maharajah, but most unfortunately the handsome little horse had broken his fetlock joint and had been sent to the

stud. Outsiders were represented by that good horseman Captain Butlean from Lucknow, and the ever faithful Jaffir, who had come into a legacy of Rs. 5,000 from poor old Brickly Collins' estate, as well as all his racing cups, and who had now blossomed forth, according to his own story, as the trainer of a mysterious native nobleman, named Nunna Khan, for whom he had purchased Kingcraft, Salisbury, Rex and Widow ; Kingcraft had been summering at Jaintpore. It leaked out afterwards that Mr. Nunna Khan was Jaffir's son and heir, a funny little boy some three years of age. Dur-bangah's stable consisted of Caspian, Wentworth, Benham a beautiful little chestnut, scarcely over galloway height, bought from Weekes, a good looking grey Arab called Electric, the bay Wabdan, a maiden Arab Sonepore, and Bellona. Later in the meeting he added Raven and Widow to the string, neither Caspian nor Wentworth ran at Sonepore, being unfit. Jimmy had Jim Henderson's uncertain mare Rouble, Mercedes now belonging to the festive " Apples," Fieldfare, Thisbe, Birdlime, Geraldine, Peter and Mill May. Captain Butlean had only Kirby. The Jaintpore stable consisted of Mr. Harvey's Palmerston and Young Tokay, Mr. Charles' Blue Bell, Success and Madcap, the evergreen Spider, Petrel, Longfellow, Merry Lass, North Star, Fleur-de-lys, Lord Ripon (a perfect beast), Speechless and Fancy. Mr. Bob Lockhart was training and riding for Mr. St. Aubyn and had the old chestnut Bangle and a pony Ariel; these constituted the horses likely to compete during the meeting, and there seemed every prospect of rattling good racing, and a fair division of the prizes, and so it turned out. Sonepore never saw better lotteries, for it was years since they had had thousand rupee ones ; one filled on each race.

Mr. Harvey backed his horses in both events through thick and thin, but ticket takers had but poor satisfaction for their money. However, to judge from the noise made, every

one went home perfectly happy and to sleep till the band commenced its gentle tootling five minutes before the gun, that usually brings you up with a jump from your beauty sleep, and before seven o'clock the stand was simply crowded with fair lady visitors, while, down below, the host of strange faces from all parts of India proclaimed that Sonapore was indeed still to the fore, and that the meeting far excelled those of the last few years. Far to the eastern end of the gentlemen's stand might be seen the cheery face of Calcutta's inimitable Secretary, Major Ben Roberts, who brought up Tingey and little Robinson, in charge of His Highness the Durbangah Maharajah's stud. The way Benham romped home in front of Jock Harvey's grand horse, Palmerston, showed how correct was his opinion of the little horse's capabilities. Next to Major Ben stood the stalwart Major who managed the princely Estate of Durbangah; Mr. Cresswell, late owner of that grand though unfortunate horse B. Sharp, was in front and quite spoiling the view of the speaking countenance of Mr. Mills, chief promoter and sustainer of sport at Gya, now transferred to Patna. The lower tier was filled with several Tirhoot faces, first and foremost Jimmy McLeod, as well-known at Sonapore as household words. Then that quiet little man, Harry Abbott, whose voice is so seldom heard, even in the lottery rooms, and who was doomed that morning to see his paragon, Palmerston, beaten. It was a foregone conclusion Spider's losing, for he fell in the lottery to his owner's bid, who for once stoutly refused to part with even one little bit of the fiddlehead. By him stood a well-known and stalwart specimen of Tirhoot's sons, the renowned "Whang" Rennie, now alas no more. The judge's box was filled by Arthur Butler. There, too, was Chupra's chief stay, the irrepressible Bob, ever ready with a quip, never nonplussed at repartee, and whose laurels won on Bangle will as long be remembered at Bankipore and Arrah, as his tear-drawing speeches.

Great was the consternation of Jock Harvey when, after Palmerston seemed to have the Bettiah Cup safe, just opposite the stand, we saw Southall raise his whip hand and little Benham shot by the big bright bay, winning by two lengths. Princely Durbangah thus scored his first win on a Behar course midst the hearty cheers of the onlookers. Again the stable scored by Electric winning the Derby, though his stable-companion Wabdan started first favorite. Jaffir on Widow beat Spider, Geraldine and Merry Lass in the Tirhoot Stakes. Then Birdlime walked over for the Behar Stakes, and Mercedes, with Jimmy up, won a newly framed race from Bangle, Thisbe, Birdlime, Blue Bell and Longfellow.

This ended a most pleasant morning's sport, resulting chiefly in the triumph of the Maharajah's stable, which, to judge from the congratulations showered upon him and Ben Roberts, showed how popular the win was, although Mr. Harvey's disappointment was equally sympathised with. Southall's face was a caution. He considered it impossible for the horse to be beaten, and certainly seemed more to be pitied than either the owner or Harry Abbott who were quite confident that the race, if run over again, would be reversed, and were offering to run Benham over the same course and at the same weights for one thousand rupees or more, if it could be put on. Eventually a match was arranged to come off on Tuesday.

On Friday the lotteries filled well, favoritism being divided between Palmerston and Kingcraft for the Durbangah Cup. Mr. Harvey backed his nag bravely, though Jaffir would not touch Kingcraft; but a jovial Major of the 70th Regiment, with the voice of a Sims Reeves and the thirst of a sand-bank, bought him in each lottery. In the race Kingcraft made running, and romped home three lengths in front of Palmerston, who was much too fat, Fieldfare and Rouble beaten off. Mercedes, owner up, beat Peter, Kirby and Suc-

cess in the Welter; Fleur-de-lys and Mill May, with Robinson and Tingey up, ran a grand race for the Galloway Stakes, Harry's mare just doing the trick; and then came the Selling Race, Bangle, Birdlime, King Wizard, Kirby and Fancy. King Wizard bolted in the preliminary, Jimmy having almost to pull him on his haunches to escape killing an enthusiastic Bobby who would keep crossing the course. The stirrup leather gave and away went the black, completely extinguishing his chance, Kirby meanwhile got sulky and refused to start. When they at last got off, the Jaintpore pair went to the front, Fancy going a clinker to the corner, where he bolted off the course, and Bangle coming away with a wet sail won pretty easily from Birdlime, King Wizard a decent third. At the commencement of the day it looked as if bad luck was going to stick to the Jaintpore stable, first the total overthrow of Palmerston, and then the utter collapse of Success, whom Harry was half inclined to think too good for the race, but Fleur-de-lys' victory was some recompense. Jaffir sold Widow to the Maharajah of Durbangah for Rs. 2,000. Well worth the money.

On Tuesday came off the great match between Benham and Palmerston, and midst the greatest excitement Palmerston won easily, but the cup of Mr. Harvey's ill luck was not yet full, for Southall on going to scale carelessly took his bridle, and was of course over weight and disqualified. The Maharajah declined to take the match money himself and generously handed it to the Stewards towards the funds. At Monday night's lotteries Kingcraft was made a roaring favorite for the Hutwa Cup, again being unbacked by Jaffir, but bought by the same cute old soldier. Kingcraft, never headed, once more got home in front of Rouble, Benham, Raven, Spechless and Peter. Jaffir was the recipient of a handsome pin from the Major, and wore it with great pride throughout the meeting. He had a second win in the Civilians' Cup, Salisbury beating Electric, Geraldine, Wabdan, Spider and

Merry Lass. Thisbe won the Chumparun Stakes, and little North Star the Pony Stakes in a walk. In the evening Harry Abbott improvised a Gymkhana, which was greatly appreciated, one of the events especially. It was a side saddle race, the jocks being dressed in ladies' dresses, hats, etc. Three started, Bobby Llewhellin on Princess, was ticked off on the correct card as Miss Jane; Bob Lockhart on Primrose figured as Jemima; and Harry Abbott on Ganymede answered to Sarah Ann.

The following were the terms of this historical event:—

“ For all hacks nominated by ladies to be ridden by gentlemen in side saddles wearing skirts and bonnets with racing colors as jackets; distance, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile for a piece of jewellery. Any gentleman not completing the distance at a pace exceeding an exercise canter to present the lady nominating second horse with a silver bracelet. Any gentleman tumbling off to present the lady nominating third horse with a pair of silver bracelets.”

Jemima looked well in a sweet yellow jacket and black skirt. She sat well down in her saddle, and had a bold look which augured well for keeping her seat. Jane, only having learnt to ride late in life, leaned not ungracefully all over on one side, and several exclamations of “ She's off, she's off ” resounded from the laughing men of the 70th Regiment, who enjoyed this race tremendously. Jemima had a love of a hat with a real ostrich feather stuck bolt upright in the centre and which was worn by the late Lord Mayor's wife at her presentation at court. The jacket, a lovely sky blue, suited her somewhat sallow complexion admirably, and if her habit had not been somewhat immodestly short, Jemima would have been put down as a regular aristocrat. Then followed Sarah Ann, a most atrociously vulgar young woman in a bright red bonnet with green strings, yellow skirt trimmed with red, and a blue body. A regular roar of applause greeted her as

she rode gingerly down to the start. They got well away at the start, Jemima inside, going neck and neck with Sarah Ann, the pace being a clinker, poor Jane swaying about and seemingly quite out of it. Round the corner both leading ladies were seen to be at work, and such a ding dong race ensued as has seldom been seen, first one, then the other in front, skirts ballooning beautifully in the air. "Jemima wins, no, Sarah Ann," was the cry and it looked either's race till that cute old lady Jemima, riding close to the gaudily attired Sarah Ann, prevented that damsel using her whip, but, alas for her, the race was not over, for by this time Jane, who had got used to the saddle, came up with a rush, caught and passed the pair, holding on like grim death to the lady mayor-ess's feather, and winning by a short moustache.

The lotteries on Thursday were better than any. For the Doomraon Cup, Speechless 7st., Fieldfare 8st. 9lbs., Palmerston 9st. 12lbs. and Rouble 8st. 9lb., were declared to start; favoritism being divided between Fieldfare and Palmerston, who each sold for Rs. 310. Electric, now called Flash, was the tip for the Hajeepore Stakes; Thisbe and Mercedes were equally fancied for the Champagne Stakes, and Widow was served up hot for the Chupra Cup. On the course nothing would go down with the public but Palmerston; but at one time it looked as if Mr. Harvey's bad luck was going to stick to him, for Speechless ran a great horse, and Southall had to use the whip freely to save the race. Salisbury upset the apple cart in the Hajeepore Stakes, just beating Geraldine; Merry Lass, with a feather on her back, third. Harry Abbott, who had bought her two years previously from Jaffir for Rs. 4,000, and had never won a race with her, on her coming into the paddock took off her saddle, and putting the reins into Jaffir's hands said, "Here take the brute away, you may have her back for nothing!" Jaffir jumped up barebacked and went off straight to the stables. Thisbe, Tingey up, won the Cham-

pagne Stakes, after a magnificent finish with Jimmy McLeod on Snowdrop. For the Chupra Cup there were half a dozen false starts due to Donaldson on Fleur-de-lys not joining his horses, she was a perfect tempered mare, but the little scamp had evidently been on the drink the previous night and was jumpy. When they did get off, he lost fully ten lengths. Widow rushed to the front, Spider soon joined her, but the roarer died away at the distance, and then Fleur-de-lys came like a streak of lightning and almost caught the big mare, who, however, won by a couple of lengths. The Lall Serryah stable and Jaffir were the chief winners. One of the Gymkhana events was a postillion race which Jimmy collared for the fourth year running. Rowland Hudson was an absentee that year, but Messrs. Nicolay, Apperley and Jimmy well kept up the reputation of Chumparun, and in Bob Lockhart Chupra could boast of a cool, good rider. Harry Abbott's riding days were over, for he had come a delicious crowner early in the year at Calcutta, when riding Vantage in a race against Benham, Fisherboy and Dauntless, she broke her leg at the distance when going strong, and falling through the rails, pitched her rider on to a carriage, breaking three or four ribs and making a nice mess of him. After this home rule was brought to bear, and he had to promise to give up race riding for the future. Since then, like that old hero Jeshurun, he has waxed fat.

CHAPTER XXVII.

YEAR 1881.

Now in spite of the fillip given to Sonepore racing in 1880 by the birth of the Durbangah racing stable, and the numerous additions of the outside owners who sent their horses to Jaintpore, Lall Serryah and Burowley to train, it was curious to notice that while Mozufferpore, much less easy of access and unfashionable for years as a racing centre, was

getting more popular, Sonepore was steadily going down hill, and the reason therefor was not difficult to gauge. Dear old Bicrom with the very best of intentions, knew not a race horse from a donkey, and year by year he seemed to get more and more blind to the reasons for his meeting decreasing in popularity among the general racing community. Let us take his Stewards for 1881, and be it always remembered that when a Secretary has been in harness as long as he had, he could, if gifted with any powers of organisation, have gathered round him sportsmen, instead of unsympathetic individuals who looked on the racing portion of the show more as a nuisance than aught else. Arthur Butler, who was the only one with any knowledge of racing, headed the list. He was straight as a die and a splendid judge of a horse, and as part owner in a racing stable, his sound judgment and attention to details, made him invaluable to an impulsive, generous, large-hearted, careless of expenditure, thorough sportsman like Jimmy McLeod, who would put up twenty friends every meeting, feed and train their nags, enter them, pay their expenses going from meeting to meeting, and then forget to send in a bill. Arthur Butler looked on this part of the show as "*Magnifique, mais pas la guerre*," he was perhaps a bit partial as a Steward. Then came good old Tom Gibbon, whom Jimmy had coaxed a year or two previously to come out of his shell and appear as an owner of horses, but to expect poor, gentle, shy, retiring Tom to pose as a racing oracle, was almost as hopeless as to try and teach a hippopotamus to rival the Tescichorean revels of a ballet dancer. Fred Halliday, best of good fellows and hosts, cared naught for the green sward, though he would subscribe liberally to it. Major Money, a good man in his place, but an absolute ignoramus in racing matters; Anthony Patrick MacDonell, whom planters loved not, was shoved on as Steward chiefly to keep him as much as possible out of mischief; Paddy Hudson by this time cared little for the game, while Mr. C. C. Quinn was a nonentity.

Best of the boiling, but slow to rouse to a sense of what was wanted, was Albert Mangles, yet even he, like Bicrom, seemed to fancy that to publish a programme and wait for results began and ended the duties of a Secretary. Curiously enough to a great extent Mofussil Secretaries and Stewards still cling to this palpably false idea, and yet what went far to ruin Sonepore in the eighties, when meets were fewer and personal hospitality greater than in 1896, is naturally more likely to do so now, when meetings on a direct line of railway offer better purses, better gambling facilities, and better accommodation to owner, trainer and horse, than did or even still do our Behar Meetings. Search the world and it will be harder to find any race-meeting to equal Sonepore in social enjoyment ; go to Lucknow, Calcutta, Bombay, Meerut, Madras or any ordinary head centre, as stranger and owner of horses, and what do you find, you have to put up in a dirty hotel or lodging house—noise, filth, vermin and foul food being the luxuries you have to pay for ; nothing to do when you come back from the course in the morning, save to wait for every other day's racing. At Sonepore from the moment visitors arrive, till the camps break up, there is not one second free from fun. All owners want, is to have once been asked there *as guests*, and they will go on patronising the meeting. But it was in this Mr. Abercrombie and his stewards failed. What filled Jimmy's, Gwatkin's and Harry's stables? chiefly because they invariably asked as guests, to their camps at Sonepore, the men who trusted them with their horses. Coax owners and our Sonepore and Mozufferpore Meetings will be better in 1900 and on ahead than they have hitherto been. The racing has never at Sonepore from 1883 to 1896 cost the Stewards, or visitors, one anna, for the Secretary has invariably managed, so that a surplus has been available from racing funds to keep going the ever-increasing expenses of the ball room, bands and entertainments. Surely,

therefore, it would in 1881 and the preceding year have been well worth the while of the Sonopore Stewards, when they had men like the Princes of Jodhpore, Dacca and Cooch Behar, as well as the best European sportsmen England or India could boast of, willing to come to their meeting, to have parcelled them out among the local native Princes' and Stewards' camps, and have made much of them. It was more this blindness to good management, than all the tall talk about family party business, that confined Behar racing from this epoch, to mere local competition. There was very little to choose between the rival local stables, each, to a certain extent, was jealous of the others, yet no truer friends ever existed than the three Europeans who virtually ruled Behar racing during the eighties. The papers were beginning to slang Sonopore, when Judex Simpson, who, still though an absentee, loved Sonopore as did, and do, all its devotees, wrote thus to the *Asian* in March 1881 :—

“In the present instance the past can compare favorably with the present, as can be seen from the fact that then the *five* days of racing were supplemented by an entirely extra sixth day, on the Monday; and now people are quite satisfied with four days. To me, who had sworn by Sonopore in the old days, who had felt it to be unapproached and unapproachable by anything in any way, it was sad to hear of this diminution of its regular days from five to four, for I felt how the amount of interest taken in it in former days would have made this impossible, *vide* the extra sixth day, which obtained in 1855, as well as in 1856. Indeed so bound up were all frequenters of the meeting with all connected with it, and such friends had it made us, that I do not know what it might not have extended to but for that terrible mutiny with its permanently deteriorating effect upon everything. How our racing has gone off, in quality not in quantity, since then; and how much have not native non-official officers lost by the extinction of John Com-

pany, the best masters that servants ever had ; and my good friends, planters, little as you liked the *regime* then, would the Indigo Crusade ever have taken place if the Company had been to the fore ?

“However, I took up my pen not to drift into Indian politics, but to compare Sonépore of the present with that of the past in no cavilling spirit, but in the humble hope that I might possibly suggest some old ideas which might go towards improving the present. A very little word may do a great deal of mischief, so why might it not do good perchance ?

“A remarkable difference between the past and the present is in the large ‘camps’ which are now a feature of the camp. They are often very expensive, needlessly so I mean, for guests surely need not have cheval glasses in each tent, the good food and good liquors all well bestowed. But I cannot but think that it is owing to the largeness of these camps that this general and exceeding good fellowship which used to grow with each day of the meeting is not now apparent. Large camps there must be when people have many guests who come from a distance, who could not otherwise be there on their own account ; and if these camps were composed only of such elements, they would perhaps only add to the general association. But now the guests in camps are often made up only of neighbours, who would otherwise come on their own account as they formerly used to do, and this I think is unfortunate. A large camp is a society in itself, and people in it must more or less hang together ; they are independent of others at first, and sometimes just a little tired of each other at last. Now these same people if there separately on their own account, or if making up small independent parties look to others for their society and form in themselves an available society for others, which gets pleasanter and pleasanter as days go on and they know more of each other.

“Also I have known many pleasant people not go because they had not a large party of their own, and I have also known charming people leave who had come alone because they felt out in the cold among all the large ‘guests’ camps.’ Mess Camps are a different thing, but they are perhaps pleasantest when small in themselves with room for plenty of droppers-in. No one would wish to preach diminished hospitality, but the guests from a distance, though limited in numbers, are enough generally to make a party pleasant, and then the droppers-in to a pleasant camp are never wanting, in quantity at least. I may be utterly wrong; ’Tis frequently so; but I cannot but feel confident that if people in the neighbourhood were allowed to come on their own hooks, separately or in small ‘camps,’ they would come if they were wanted, and that some would come who stay away as it is, but would be decided additions if they did come. On the first evening they would miss the big camp, but by the time that the afternoon of the first day’s racing was over they would be beginning to like those whom they would, even by the time the meeting was over. All really used to love one another, and a friend of mine, known to fame as well as to many, ‘Mr. Herwald,’ used to retire with me, far from all maddening crowd, at midday of the midday of the meeting to reflect in sad and sober earnest that half of the meeting was over. It used really to depress us for a quarter hour or so, and then it all became jollier than ever. Some of us met our ‘fates’ there, but we literally loved so many there that there was not time to be particular in one’s attentions, notwithstanding that the verandah of the ball room was then unseated and uncarpeted and lit only by the moon.

“How peaceful and bright the course used to look in the full moonlight, and how sweet accents could be heard over that balustrade as the music sounded dimly, though clear enough in that unsurpassable ball room. What a ball room

that used to be, and must be now, so smooth, so elastic, so perfectly proportioned. And how one used to enjoy it! One year long long ago others besides myself must still remember our dancing the last light out. V.C.'s, Commissioners, Generals, or Judges, or none of these, and the wives thereof, they now are, but surely they cannot have forgotten the small but very jolly party that we were in that wet meeting of days long gone by!"

Later on *The Asian* wrote editorially :—

"Racing in Behar seems in a bad way, and it has come to this, that either the present welter weights must be abandoned, or the races must become sky meetings. It is hardly likely that owners will run valuable horses under weights likely to break them down, and if the reputation of racing in Behar is to be kept up, this must be altered at the principal meetings. Welter weights were all, very well when the race meetings were confined to local stables. Now they are opened to everyone; and if the success of an open meeting is desired, the terms of the races must be such as to suit all. Why not, sportsmen of Behar, conform to modern ideas at Sonepore and Mozufferpore and indulge the propensities of the amateur heavy weights at the minor meetings!"

But even if the short-sighted policy of the Stewards did much to virtually close Behar meetings to outsiders, we were now on the eve of a cycle of successful meetings, for year by year the three local stables were not only increasing numerically, but were improving the quality of the horses, and once more were thoroughbreds to be seen galloping on our courses. Moreover, we had to welcome as additions to our local racing men, the generous young Prince of Durbangah, who had John Irving to train and young Jimmy Robinson to ride for him. His first purchase was the Arab Wabdan, bought from Captain Doyne; he also bought B. Sharp, who had been performing well in Calcutta, from Gwatkin Williams.

In every way the meeting of 1881 was inferior to its predecessor, camps were fewer and the only outsiders present were Jaffir, Mr. Hopkins with two useless ones and Brewty from Bombay with the Aga Saheb's Earl and Secuhder. Mr. Harvey after a short but brilliant career of two years had retired from the turf and had sold Palmerston to Coomar Indra Churn Singh of Paikparah, but his place in the Jaintpore Stable had been taken by the Messrs. Apcar, who had sent Southall to Australia early in the year to get them horses, and he returned with Rosine and Rebecca, two very fine mares, and brought Perrett, then able to scale six stone, to steer them. Caractacus and Queensland had also been added to the string, and a fine looking countrybred of General Parrott's named Sir Bevis. So, with Spider, Success, Blue Bell and some more of the old lot, the stable numerically was strong, but it was decidedly unfit when the meeting opened. Jimmy had a big string as usual, Dunrobin, Torchlight, Audrey, Geraldine, Stockport, Mercedes, Lantern Fly, Thisbe and Doleful. Durbangah had Wentworth, Caspian, Benham, Widow, Flash, Sonepore and Sir Peter. Jaffir had Kingcraft, Rex and the countrybred Jung Bahadoor. Gwatkin Williams was again unrepresented. Poor lotteries the first night, Wentworth favorite for Bettiah Cup, Jung Bahadoor a hot favorite for Tirhoot Stakes; and Stockport ditto in Behar Stakes; Rebecca was entered for this race, but scratched by Mr. Apcar. Wentworth beat both Queensland and Kingcraft easily in the Cup; but that game mare Geraldine beat Jung in the Tirhoot Stakes, Widow and Sir Bevis behind them. Another upset in the Behar Stakes, Dunrobin, who sold for forty rupees in the lotteries, winning after a pretty race from Torchlight; the favorite nowhere. The Derby was an easy win for Durbangah's Sonepore. Saturday's fields were poor. In the Welter, Jimmy on Mercedes won a pretty race from Lantern Fly, "Apples" up, the

favorite Benham third only. Bob Lockhart's Bangle beat Marion and Spider in the Selling Stakes, and The Earl had an easy win in the Durbangah Purse from Jung Bahadoor and Sonepore. Bob pulled out Bangle for a second selling race, and putting little Perrett up, won from Stockport, Thisbe, Success and Corkscrew. On the third day Rex, the best pony India ever saw, won the Civilians' Cup in a trot from The Earl, Geraldine and Sonepore; and then Tingey on Doleful and Jimmy on Mercedes fought out a great finish for the Chumparun Stakes, the professional beating the amateur by a head. A hockey pony race, won by Jimmy on Exchange, led to an objection, which was disallowed. The fourth day was a little better, but the handicaps were wretched. Wentworth beat Queensland and Success in the Doomraon Cup, and then came *the* race of the meeting, when the despised Flash, let in at 7st. won the Hajepore Stakes from Rex 9st. 12lbs., Geraldine 9st. 12lbs., Sonepore 7st. 4lbs., Spider 7st, and Jung Bahadoor 9st. 7lbs. The Stewards did not make this handicap, but sensibly got a racing man to do it for them. Doleful, steered by "Apples," beat Mercedes, Blue Bell, Thisbe and Corkscrew in the Champagne Stakes, and Jung walked over for the Chupra Cup. So ended the racing. The *Asian's* correspondent wrote of it:—

"As far as the racing is concerned, there is not the slightest doubt that Sonepore has been for the last five years deteriorating terribly, and it seems a pity that the managing committee are not sensible enough to recognise the fact, and entirely change the character of the meeting. Years ago Sonepore was visited by heaps of outside racing men, but now it is entirely deserted, save by the three local stables of Chumparun, Tirhoot and Durbangah, and even their representatives can scarcely write, like the visitors of a Dak Bungalow, 'satisfied;' and from what I have heard on all sides, it is hoping against hope to expect outsiders to patronise it. One

dissatisfied owner makes many, and there is no doubt a very strong feeling exists against Sonapore. The majority of visitors who attend the meeting come purely and simply to enjoy the most pleasant camping picnic in India. Ladies are there in legion, and the sterner sex in attendance on them far prefer seeing their subscriptions spent on balls, lawn tennis and other amusements which the ladies can share and enjoy equally with them to plunging at the lotteries or seeing horses that they do not know, belonging to owners they do not care a dump about, gallop round the course. There is literally no interest taken by the public in the first-class races here, and in the lottery rooms, with the exception of perhaps half a dozen punters, the business is confined exclusively to the representatives of three stables, and there is very little margin of profit left for them, when the tickets they have lost, the high prices they have to pay for supposed good things, which generally fail to come off, jockey's fees, forced subscription, and other inevitable expenses are deducted.

“ For the last two years, sky races in the afternoon have been, by the consent of the Stewards, allowed, and a great deal more interest is shown in them than in the legitimate business, because all racers being barred, the competing hacks and ponies are known to almost every lady and gentleman present. Why they were not got up this year I could not exactly find out, though somebody said it was because the gentleman, who has hitherto kindly officated as Secretary, took offence last year because one man alone in the whole camp had refused to subscribe the ten rupees asked for to enable prizes to be given, saying he did it on principle as he had already subscribed to the races. I heard afterwards that this individual's subscription for the entire meet had been a gold mohur only, and as he had attended both races and ball suppers, his principles were evidently those of the highest economy. I therefore

scarcely see the necessity for the Secretary's getting touchy over so unworthy a subject. He was an Emigration Agent from Calcutta.

"Amongst the entire body of Stewards there is only one gentleman who knows or cares anything about racing. The prospectus was too evidently hastily formed and still more carelessly supervised. Errors, which the veriest tyro that ever attempted to get up a pony sky meet would never have passed unquestioned, were allowed to creep in, and when objections were raised, the decisions of the Stewards were weak in the extreme, and in most instances have been appealed against.

"With regard to the handicapping I fully concur with the sentiments expressed by the correspondents of the other papers present. If the Stewards, instead of puzzling their heads for hours to bring horses together, of whose running at other places they know literally nothing, would send for the few owners or representatives of the horses, these individuals would in ten minutes frame a handicap, which the whole lot would accept and on which several lotteries would be held. It is, however, I fear too late to hope for any chance of resuscitating the Sonepore Meet, as it has become too utterly utter, but had this been done before, there might have been some hopes for the future.

"I fear I shall raise a buzz of indignation from all connected directly or indirectly with the management, but I only echo the undisguised sentiments of those outside what the correspondent of the *Pioneer* described 'as the little family party.' A lesson that might well be learned by other well-wishers of sport in getting up new race meets is the utter absurdity of the long list of complimentary stewards that almost invariably swell the list of prospectuses, who are mostly placed there in the hopes that the honor paid them will be an inducement to increase their subscriptions. Utterly ignorant of racing and its laws, with every desire to be just, their votes but too frequently go

to give weight to an entirely wrong decision. Vanity prompting them, they accept their position, and if they possibly can, shirk their work, naturally enough feeling their incapacity. Four good working men, unconnected if possible with the horses competing, would be worth a dozen dummies, and Secretaries would do well to remember this. Not a single person, even those most justified in grumbling, hesitate to express their gratitude for Mr. Abercrombie's manifold exertions. Almost everything is on his shoulders, and how he manages to stand it, and put up with the grumbling, objections, and too frequently impertinences, is a wonder. Most men would have flung up the thankless task in disgust long ago, but his equanimity carries him through everything, and it is due to him alone that one of the large local stables continues to run at Sonapore. The enthusiasm and speechifying at the last supper night might well have been dispensed with. On such a woeful collapse as occurred, the less said the better. Alas! for the days when little Mac, Teddy Drummond, Frank Vincent, Ulick Browne and Simmy ruled at Sonapore; managing it as it should be managed, ruling it with firm but generous hands, lovers of horses and sport, encouraging sportsmen and owners from all sides of India with inducements of heaps of lotteries, princely hospitality, and an extra handicap or two got up on the last day, instead of, as now, no lotteries, unless owners toss for their own money; little or no accommodation for a stranger if he comes, talks of cutting down purses, a weak prospectus, and still more deplorably weak management. Well may it be printed in large letters, 'Sonapore was.'

CHAPTER XXVIII.

YEAR 1882.

In April 1882 the *Planters' Gazette* made its first appearance, and as there were now two sporting papers, the chronicling of racing events was more reliable. India lost a good

sportsman this year, by the death of poor Monty Stewart who was running horses in partnership with Lord Bill Beresford. Prospects looked very bad for Sonepore, Mr. Abercrombie issued the usual prospectus, but finding in September that the only entries up till then, were those from the Jaintpore stable, he wrote asking Harry Abbott if he would act with him as Joint Secretary. He consented, and started by endeavouring to get up-country sportsmen to enter and come, and though it was a bit late in the day, he nevertheless managed to induce his old trainer Robinson, now with Nawab Syed Ali of Cawnpore, to bring Wicked, Yanathan and O'Kelly, and persuaded Lord William to send Ryder with Blackthorn and Mooltan, as well as Captain Hopkins, who brought Pandora and a couple of others. H.H. of Cooch Behar had a pony called Kate. Gwatkin Williams, Bob Lockhart, and another sportsman running as the Conservatives, all promised to support the meeting. They had an unknown commodity in an Australian named Beaconsfield, Bangle, and another called Northcote; Gwatkin was also looking after two of Kajeh Ahsanoola's, Dacoit and Kangaroo. Paragraph, Somerset and The Abbot had been imported during the year by Southall for Messrs. Apar and Abbott, and had hot weathered at Jaintpore; the stable had also Rebecca, Queensland, Chieftain, Christmas Carol, Caractacus, Sir Bevis, Speechless, Maid of All Work, Devastation, Rosine, Chaste Susannah, North Star, Avenger, Chief and a little daughter of Kathleen's by Echo, called Mavourneen. Neither Paragraph nor Somerset ran, being reserved for Calcutta. Captain Charley Gordon of Segowlie, just back from Egypt, had a thin looking rail of an Australian called Wily Pedestrian. Captain Paget, the gunner of Dinapore, had a black gelding Seer, and the Chupra sportsmen were determined, if possible, once more to bring back the prestige of the meeting; Sproggins, Nixon, Bob Lockhart, Gwatkin and all the planters did their level best, and

at any rate the meeting was not the failure it promised to be a few weeks previously. Jimmy had his old lot and backed up the meeting loyally, his stable consisted of Mercedes, now Rowland Hudson's, Blackbird, Glacialine, Geraldine, Scamp, Dunrobin, Torchlight and Toots. Durbangah had signified his intention of dropping racing, as after Major Ben Roberts went home, he could find no one to manage for him. From the camps were lost the regular ones of Mr. Metcalfe, the Commissioner, gone on deputation, and Durbangah's, but Mr. and Mrs. Mangles had a large farewell one, and Gwatkin Williams too. So had the giddy Chupra bachelors, one of whom was soon to leave their ranks. Sarun backed up the meeting heartily, and Jimmy had his usual big gathering. Early in the season Messrs. Abbott and Apcar foreseeing the falling off in Behar of first class racing, had begun to train a portion of their string at Bangalore, and to patronise the other Indian Meetings. Poor old Spider, the hero of a hundred hard fought tussels, had crossed the bourne. Along with Somerset, Paragraph and The Abbot, Southall had brought up a chase horse to Jaintpore for the popular Mr. George Thomas of Calcutta; this was Cumberland, a fine big bay. During August he was attacked with a go of heat apoplexy, and Abbott put Dewing, the cross country jock, on to old Spider's back about ten o'clock in the morning, and told him to ride smartly to the nearest telegraph station, Mozufferpore, twenty miles off, and thence wire to Calcutta for a Veterinary-Surgeon. As far as is known Dewing scarcely slacked rein, till when within a quarter of mile of his destination, the game old horse dropped dead from over exertion. Spider was a studbred rejection, had never been a day sick, and never had a shoe on his foot in his life. The Stewards were in a dreadful quandary just before the meeting. To add to their other troubles, they heard the new Bengal and North-Western

Railway line was to be carried right through the course, which would naturally have ruined it; but fortunanelly Mr. Levinge, the Engineer in charge, and his attendant satellites, visited the meeting at which Master Harry and his backers did them so well in the eating and drinking line, and Bob Lockhart talked to them so touchingly, that they wept tears of sympathy and declared the railway itself should be abandoned before Sonepore should suffer. They said they considered the Stewards were the best judges of wine in the country, but as Bob pointed out, the perfection of their brands was chiefly due to the fact that Mr. Vesey Westmacott, boss of the country grog-shops, was present; and he would have fined the Stewards heavily had they given him a bad bottle of the Boy. Thus Sonepore was saved, and the line taken through the elephant's instead of the biped's camp.

The Chupra officials were all there, but not in one big camp. Mr. Paul, the Collector, a rare good sort, just leaving the District, was by himself, Dr. Russell ditto, and so was the Joint Magistrate. The fair was a big one, the polo ground in great request, and entire harmony prevailed throughout; none of the crotchety objections that spoilt preceding years marred the good fellowship. The lotteaies on the first night were not very good, but one filled on each race. Three accepted for the Leger—The Abbot, Princess and Kangaroo, the first-named a hot favorite. For the Derby, Mooltan, Geraldine, O'Kelly, Lielle, Christmas Carol and Kathleen's two-year-old filly Mavourneen by Echo; nothing was looked at but O'Kelly. The Behar Stakes had Toots, Devastation, Lady Maude, Northcote and Chancellor, the first three equally fancied; for the Galloways, Pandora, Glacialine, Chieftain, Mabelle and Kate accepted. Pandora alone was backed heavily. In the morming The Abbot opened the ball for Jaintpore by romping home for the Leger; and had Greenhalgh any idea at first, how good ugly little Mavourneen

was, he might have scored a second win in the Derby, in which after one false start, owing to Mavourneen being on the wrong side of the post, the field got off fairly together, O'Kelly and Lielle going to the front, Tingey on Geraldine lying next, while the Jaintpore pair and Mooltan whipped in. At the three-quarter mile Geraldine and Mooltan, followed by Mavourneen, who was on the extreme outside, took closer order, and the four leaders ran a pretty race to the corner, when Mavourneen shot to the front, and O'Kelly fell back beaten, the countrybred filly coming round very wide. At the distance Ryder was niggling at Mooltan; Geraldine had cried enough, and the cornstalk was sitting still; but inch by inch Ryder crept up, and in the last few yards the superior stride telling, the uncertain bay came home a winner, all out, by a short length; Geraldine third, the rest easing off. Had the filly been able at any time to slip inside, she must have won, for she came in seemingly quite undistressed. She galloped just in the same form as her good old mother. The other jockeys declared they could hardly ride from laughing when they found the only dangerous one in the race was the queer little despised weed they had all been chaffing Southall about for the last week.

The Behar Stakes was a fairly easy win for Jimmy on his own nag Toots, though Tingey on the Jaintpore representative, Devastation, who had run off the course at the start, made him sit down and ride at the distance. Pandora won the Galloway Stakes in a walk, the first and only win Captain Hopkins had at Sonapore. Much better lotteries on Friday. For the Bettiah Cup five accepted, in one lottery held Beaconsfield and Caractacus divided favoritism.

A poor lottery on the Durbangah Purse, only Wicked, Mavourneen and Christmas Carol going out. Wicked favorite.

The Welter had six acceptors, Wily Pedestrian, Yanathan, Mercedes, Maid of all Work, Sir Bevis and Seer,

Mercedes backed and made favorite by her stable at Rs. 300, Wily Pedestrian bringing only Rs. 70. For the Selling Race Bangle, Princess, Chaste Susannah and Speechless all fancied, and bringing on an average a hundred each. The Bettiah Cup treated us to a great race between all, bar Dacoit, who was soon beaten. Jimmy Robinson rode Beaconsfield as well, as Southall rode Caractus badly, and midst deafening cheers the Chupra boy's horse got home by a neck. Wicked won the Durbangah Purse easily enough, but now came an upset, for Wily Pedestrian got off with a flying start in the Welter, and was never collared; Speechless and Susannah ran a good race for the Selling Stakes, the horse winning, because the Chaste one swerved at the finish. Jimmy's Blackbird finished up the day by winning the Pony Race.

The morning of Sunday, the 26th, came on in the midst of rain, iron-grey clouds and general gloominess. The overcast sky, the drizzling of the rain, and the cold, desolate appearance of the tents, made between blankets the most comfortable place where one could lie and ponder on the strange ways of Providence, which at one fell swoop had turned the bright merry meeting into a sad-looking gathering. The pitiless rain which poured down till the *shamianas* began to give way, and tents to sway in an alarming manner, brought out the latent energy of burly planters and still more burly civilians, who might be seen with *kodallies* in hand cutting the channels round their separate tents, to let the water run clear, and hammering down the tent pegs to keep them from slipping out of the earth softened by the penetrating "jupsie." This continuous drizzle rendered the roads over the "deara" lands something awful. Tenacious mud, strong enough to act as book-jack to some gentlemen, who were observed to quietly go into their tents in a limping manner on returning from the ghat. It was afterwards found out that this was

owing to their having lost their boots in the gummy mud. On the road to the river, the multitude of natives who struggled through this awful mass of stickiness to the ghat, some four or five miles distant, was so great, or the tenacity of grip in the *ponk* so powerful, that even these careful creatures left shoes sticking to such an extent, that by native shoes alone, the track could be found to the ghat, where Baboo Beharry Singh's steamer transported the passengers to the southern bank of the Ganges.

On the other side, the mud up to the Bankipore *pucca* road was very nearly as bad, in some parts worse. Cruelty to animals was largely displayed in the way poor wretched ponies were compelled to drag heavy *ticca* gharries.

After an early breakfast, the more venturesome among the ladies and gentlemen attended a midday service held in the supper room, after which cards being tabooed, chat and gossip took their places, and silvery tones mingled with masculine gruffness in the once cosy and pretty drawing-room *shamianas*. Going round the camp during a short break in the rain, which took place in the evening, the extent of damage done was at once seen; most of the drawing-room tents were uninhabitable, and in one some horses might be seen revelling, where the night before flirtation had run merry riot. The lawn tennis tournament, which was finished when the fine weather returned, was won by Miss Richardson and Mr. Harry Lee after a hard fought battle. Among the players, one of the most admired for her style was Miss Hunt. Her overhand service was at times magnificent, and there were very few men present at the meet who could do it better. A lawn tennis handicap in the Chupra camp was won by Colonel Skinner, who walked in an easy winner.

Taking camps all round without exception the Chupra camp deserved credit for the excellent way in which it was managed from beginning to end without a single hitch or

trouble of any kind, and the kind-hearted lady who made the arrangements for so many guests, deserved both credit and thanks for the great success which attended her exertions.

Polo was played nearly every night, no serious accident occurred, though Sproggins Mackenzie got cannoned from his horse, resulting in a torn boot and damaged toe, and Apples gallantly received the polo ball in his dexter optic.

On Monday it cleared a bit, and at the lottery rooms in the evening it was evident the spirits of the racing portion of the community had not suffered. For the Hutwa Cup Handicap, the following accepted :—Blackthorn 9st. 7lbs., Lord Beaconsfield 8st. 10lbs., Queensland 8st. 7lbs., Dacoit 7st. All but the last were fancied and backed, Rebecca, slightly the favorite. For the Civilians' Cup Wicked, Geraldine, Christmas Carol, and Avenger, the firstnamed favorite. The Chumparun Stakes was well patronised, Dunrobin, Speechless, Mercedes, Torchlight, Toots, Bangle and Chaste Susannah elected to go, Toots and Mercedes red hot favorites, Speechless next in demand. On Tuesday the sky was bright enough, but the going terribly heavy. The Hutwa Cup resolved itself into a duel between the Jaintpore pair, Perret on Queensland getting home a length in front of Tingey on Rebecca, whom Harry had backed at the lotteries. Jimmy was the lucky buyer of Queensland. Wicked cantered in for the Civilians' Cup, and the ever lucky Mr. Fraser's Dunrobin won the Chumparun Stakes. Timing throughout was awfully slow. A clear fine Wednesday made the going nice for Thursday, and the *shamianas* having dried, things hummed again. Messrs. Williams and Butler did the handicaps throughout, and did them so well, that nearly all the imposts were accepted. For the Doomraon Cup there were three, Rebecca 8st., Queensland 8st. 7lbs., and Beaconsfield 7st. 12lbs., Queensland favourite in two lotteries. Wicked was favorite for the Hajepore Stakes, though Christmas Carol pressed him close. For the Champagne

Stakes six declared, Toots a long way most fancied; Pandora, a hot favorite for the Galloway Handicap, bringing Rs. 270, Chief, Rs. 80 and Glacealine, Rs. 40. Lovely going in the morning. The Doomraon Cup proved the very best race of the meeting, one false start caused by Beaconsfield's fidgetiness, then they swept past the stand all together, Rebecca slightly in front of Beaconsfield, Queensland at the latter's girths, the whole way; the same distance parted them till, when close home, Rebecca was joined by Beaconsfield, soon, however, to be collared in turn by Queensland, who first caught the judge's eye by a neck; half a length separating the other two.

The Hajeepore Stakes was thought a moral by the professional element for O'Kelly; Harry Abbott fancied both his light weights likely to be there or thereabouts, while Wicked had but little public favor. Robinson never brought up Wicked till he saw O'Kelly in trouble, and then came with a rush, having a stone in hand. Avenger, who was going very strong till close home, was only beaten on account of sore shins troubling him at the finish.

The Champagne Stakes was another very pretty race, Chaste Susannah and Dunrobin led for the first quarter, then Speechless, skilfully steered into inside place by Tingey, forged to the front, old Yanathan coming next, all the rest together. Speechless, who went on increasing his lead, till the grey was unable to catch him, won easily by a length. The grey the same distance in front of Toots; Chaste Susannah a bad last.

The handsome Pandora, in spite of her heavy impost could easily have won the Galloway Stakes had she not swerved when just opposite the distance post. Tingey in this race showed what a perfect horseman he was; Ryder just out from England, had been bucking that Archer, Fordham and Wood could give the Indian professionals any amount, but Tingey's finish on Chief will ever be remembered by those who witnessed it as one of the most brilliant displays of riding they have seen.

A quarter mile scramble for all ponies, 13 hands and under, bought at the fair, for which the generous young Maharajah of Cooch Behar gave a purse, brought out a dozen competitors. Whack, whack, whack, went the whips from the very start, the result being that Messrs. Barclay and Apples ran a dead heat, the favorite, Mr. Cresswell's Potiphar's Wife, being nowhere. On running off the dead heat, Mr. Barclay not being used to such unusual exertion, want of condition told on him, and long before his pony caved in, the rider was done, so Apples, always fit as a fiddle, cantered home an easy winner. This finished the Sonepore Races of 1882. The course was perfect, prizes good, lotteries well filled, and the management had the full confidence of the public. At the supper in the evening Mr. Cresswell in a feeling speech proposed the health of Mr. Abercrombie, who in reply, said that the success of the meeting was entirely due to Harry Abbott's exertions in rescuing the racing from utter failure, by inducing the Maharajah of Jodhpore, Lord William Beresford, and other owners to send horses and thereby show the public the good racing they had witnessed. Harry elevating himself in a chair, declaimed any praise whatever, saying truthfully that from start to finish it was to Mr. Abercrombie, whose excellent arrangements of the camps, balls and suppers had really contributed to make the meeting such a pleasant one. As far as racing was concerned, he asserted that he would guarantee next year to show them some of the best horses in India running for their cups, and that instead of Ichabod being applicable to Sonepore, it should be termed the Phoenix Meeting. He also alluded very feelingly to Mr. and Mrs. Mangles' approaching departure, and called on the company to give them a farewell ovation of cheers, which they did uproariously. Mr. Butler proposed the health of the ladies, to which Bob Lockhart replied in his usual graceful style, and all retired to their virtuous couches, thoroughly well pleased with the ten days' picnic.

Harry Abbott owed any amount of thanks to the Chupra contingent for the cordial way in which they supported his efforts, as also to Messrs. Butler and Cresswell for their assistance in the handicaps. Jimmy's camp and stable were also towers of strength. The settling was got over most satisfactorily, Messrs. Cresswell and Abbott being the largest winners. Luckily there were no heavy losers. Just after the Dumraon Cup Jimmy bought Beaconsfield from the Conservatives, the reason for the sale being that their leading light, Bob Lockhart, proved the old adage "lucky at racing unlucky in love" to be in his case entirely incorrect, for it leaked out on Thursday evening that he had wooed and won the neatest and nicest lassie at the meeting; and ere a month elapsed he led Miss Vanrennen to the altar, since then the happy pair have been the backbone of Sonepore Meetings, for is not their hospitable camp ever the *crème de la crème* of every year's gathering? and round their piano every evening visitors crowd to listen to good music; tell tales of the last meeting before Bob was married, and relate to new comers how, on hearing the news, the dulcet tones of Bob Berrill's mellifluous voice rang out.

He's not lost to us for ever, our brilliant beamish boy,
Best looking of our bachelors, our Chupra spinsters' joy :
So we'll bear up in our sorrow, and check the rising sob,
While we pledge fair Miss Vanrennen, and her well selected Bob.

Early in December the wedding of Mr. Lockhart and Miss Vanrennen was celebrated with great *eclat* at Bankipore, over 60 people witnessing the ceremony in the pretty little church, which was most tastefully decorated with white roses. Miss Halliday and Miss Richardson officiated as bridesmaids, waited on by four little tots, two of them nieces of the bridegroom, daughters of Mr. Coffin of Sartee, the other two daughters of Mr. Arthur Butler of Motihari. The happy

pair, 'after the ceremeony, accompanied by their friends, were sumptuously banquetted at the hospitable house of Mr. Mangles, alas too soon to be lost to Behar.

There is an amusing anecdote about Mr. Apperley, which it would be unfair to that humorous sportsman to leave out of these chronicles. At one of the balls, Apples took the lady he had been dancing with to the long corridor outside the supper room, to get some fresh air; she had never been to Sonepore before, and asked "What place is this?" "Oh," said Apples "this is 'Kissy ka jugger.'" She knew a little Hindostanee, and jumped up, ablaze with indignation, "How dare you insult me, Sir," she said. "What have I done," asked Apples. "It isn't what you've done, it's what you said." "Well I'm blessed," answered Apples, "this comes of your ignorance of the language. I didn't mean what you thought I did. 'Kissy ka jugger' means anybody's place, everyone is allowed to come here." The lady was obliged to accept the explanation, but the story leaked out, and the corridor has been known as "Kissy ka jugger" ever since.

CHAPTER XXIX.

YEAR 1883.

But for 1883 in spite of Harry's boast, things looked worse than ever. The only entries were from Messrs. Cresswell and the Jodhpore Princes. Harry Abbott had sold his share of the stable to his partners, and went in April, for his first trip home, since he came out in 1862. Jimmy McLeod had gone on a visit to Australia, and did not return till too late to prepare his horses for Sonepore. The Messrs. Apcar had now taken to send their horses regularly to Bangalore to train, and only a few summered at Jaintpore, and when Harry got back at the end of June, it was only to find there was little or no chance of a meeting. The Calcutta Exhibition was on, and localites could not afford the double expense of a Sonepore camp and a

jaunt to Calcutta. Besides which the Behar Light Horse were booked for inspection during the exhibition week at Calcutta, and the boys wanted what bawbees they had for the bigger show. So for the first time since its initiation Sonepore was abandoned, and only a few Chupra officials camped under the trees, a desolate, wretched crew. Early in the year Mozufferpore had been very successful, though the lotteries were not up to those of 1882, when thirty thousand rupees worth filled on the Durbangah Cup alone. Gwatkin Williams had sold his entire string to Nawab Kajeh Ahsunoola, and Durbangah had now formed a confederacy with Lord William Beresford, and though this of course ensured his having a powerful stable, it drew his horses away from district racing.

The *Planters' Gazette* wrote of the *fiasco* of 1883:—

"We hear that the number of horses and cattle flocking this year to Sonepore is, if anything, beyond the average, and that, in spite of the absence of the European camps, prices are likely to rule excessively high, as not only have the Calcutta Tramways Company bespoken agents to purchase for them, but the horse dealing firms in the same city will also be strongly represented. It seems indeed a sin to sound even a temporary *requiem* over one of the oldest, most unique and most pleasant meetings in India; but it was inevitable, as we have in previous issues fully pointed out. Looking back to old turf records, we find that the Hajepore Races were amongst the first ever held in Behar, and that as far back as 1839 the *locale* was changed to Sonepore. We hope to be able later on when space presses less strongly on us than it does now, to produce a series of reminiscences of Sonepore, which we are perfectly certain will prove of interest to the many readers of our journal who may have either retired to the dear old country of their nativity, or still growl under Indian heat and Riponian misgovernment. Take one instance alone to show how those who love and know the meet regularly visit it; this will be the

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first year, for twenty consecutive ones, when the kindly face of Mr. John will be absent from a meet which years ago was dubbed the 'Goodwood' of India. The present ball room, which owes its origin to the sturdy appeal of Teddy Drummond, published in the *Oriental Sporting Magazine* in July 1868, will this year not resound to the pretty feet of the sweet little votaries of Terpsichore; but will stand out in all its bare whiteness of aspect unlighted from within, in the November moonlight. Unhappy Beharee Singh in his *dera* just opposite will curse the verdict that has deprived him of the numerous pickings that from year to year, he has been in receipt of from this, his El Dorado; the horse dealers will deeply deplore the absence of Messrs. McLeod, Williams and Abbott, who regularly took good horses from them at good prices, in large numbers, and for whom they religiously reserved their picked stock; and still more deeply than all will the Joint Secretaries, each in his special groove, say 'Ay de mi.' Unpolished must the dancing floor remain; unladen the supper tables and no more will the cry of 'Toss, you for a page, Sir' be heard in the snug little lottery room. Let the curtain fall sadly to slow music for this year only, and taking the words written years ago by Teddy Drummond, let us say to the racing men, in the interests of the noble sport, which must never die out as long as there are Englishmen in India:

“To the public in general in the interests of the dear old Sonapore Meet—The Goodwood of India—the one holiday that all in Behar, both Europeans and Natives, and many in Bengal and up-country, look forward to throughout the greater part of the year, as giving us all a brief escape from the collar at a most necessary season after the oven like heat of the hot weather and the steamy heat of the rains have done their best to sap our health and energy.

“To one and all; in the recollection of the beautiful groves of mangoe trees; of the picturesque encampment; of the

charming friendly gipsy life in the fresh air under the trees ; of the strains of the band floating through the but semi-conscious brain at early dawn as a summons to the races ; of the good racing ; of the pleasant balls ; of the fair faces ; of the good fellows full of fun and jollity ; of the wondrous and endless diversity of sights throughout the fair ; of the many old friends always met there, etc., etc., (without end) do I appeal. Shall Sonepore end, shall it suffer for the want of a few dirty rupees ? Never.' This is what he said in 1868, and now in 1883 the words of the present Secretaries are that they will bring it out next year in more than all its pristine glory, guaranteeing that it shall not clash with Hyderabad, and that both visitors and horses shall be ensured."

CHAPTER XXX.

YEAR 1884.

As early as May 1884 Messrs. Abercrombie and Abbott issued a four days' programme and had fair promise of support. Mr. Arthur Forbes, a genuine little sportsman, was now at Chupra and determined it should not be his fault if Sonepore did not buzz. On the Stewards' list Gwatkin Williams replaced Mr. Butler, who, after the lamented death of his wife, had gone home. Harry Abbott caught smallpox in April, fortunately his family were at Darjeeling, but it didn't bother him much ; he kicked out the doctor and cured himself with carbolic acid, amusing himself by sending daily wires to his anxious spouse of this sort, "Beauty still unimpaired, nose holding out splendidly." Having now a comparatively empty stable he began to look round for somebody to help him to fill it, and found that bright Armenian luminary of the Calcutta bar Mr. M. P. Gasper, willing to trust to his guidance, so he persuaded him to buy Paragraph from the Messrs. Aparcar, and

Avenger from Mr. Namreh, and with a few more had a respectable string. In addition to Nawab Kajeh Ahsanoola's lot, Gwatkin had now got Rhesus and First Water in training at Burowley for Mr. C. H. Moore, Jack Perrett training for him. In June at Meerut died from the effects of a fall, poor John Irving, the jockey, who had ridden many a race at Sonapore, and whose last employ had been with Durbangah. In November, the Government fiat went forth to do away with Segowlie as a military station and Behar bade a sorrowful farewell to the officers of the sporting 6th B.C., who had made themselves so thoroughly popular. Not only were the men good fellows, but the ladies of the regiment, Mrs. Wheeler and Mrs. Charley Gordon, were bad to beat in any game which the sex is allowed to indulge in. Mrs. Wheeler was a most cool and accomplished horsewoman; once when riding Jimmy's Lantern Fly at Lall Serryah, she cleared thirty-three feet with a four foot bank in the middle, and the horse never put toe on the obstacle. At tennis Mrs. Gordon was a champion, and in a bolstering match could give her husband pounds. No entries being received, save a few from Jaintpore, the Stewards once more resolved on throwing up the sponge, but the Chupra boys came forward and voted for a Gymkhana. Mr. Gasper had taken his nags up to the North-West meetings, where Paragraph, Avenger and Chloe carried everything before them. Chloe had turned out a clinker, Alec. Clarke was training and Vinall riding for the stable, Caractus had broken down, and been rebought by Harry Abbott for the Jaintpore breeding stud. Jimmy McLeod had also been going in for breeding and had two fillies fit now to gallop, by Kingcraft out of Finette, and Talkaway; he also had Lincoln, who proved most successful as a pony sire. In August Bertie Short threw up the North-West and joined the *Indigo and Tea Planters' Gazette*, now under the kind advice of Paddy Hudson changed to the *Indian Planters'*

Gazette. The *Gazette* writing about Sonepore in November said :—

“Verily Mr. Kelly Maitland was right (much as we who loved the time-honored surroundings hoped against hope) when he wrote seven years ago that Ichabod might be written against Sonepore. The House of Lords is seemingly doomed, Sonepore is gone as an aristocratic meeting, and the only thing worth living for to sportsmen of the old school in Behar is that Lord Ripon is leaving these shores never to return.”

This year saw the opening of Sonepore as a railway station of the Bengal and North-Western Railway, and great was the convenience. The old Stewards having resigned *en masse*, Mr. Arthur Forbes determined that at any rate a good sky meeting should be held, so he formed a committee of the following gentlemen :—R. S. Lockhart, E. A. Mackintosh, C. Boileau, G. Nixon, Captain O’Mealy, H. E. Abbott and himself as Honorary Secretary. The racing was, of its class fair, Jimmy, Gwatkin and Harry brought what nags they had suitable for the programme, and the fields compared favorably with the more pretentious meetings of late years. Perrett was the only professional present, the other riders being Bertie Short, Apples, Bob Lockhart, Gilbert Nicolay and Sproggins Mackenzie; Charley Webb was to have come, but had been tumbling about and broken his collar-bone just before the meeting. Rowland was an absentee, his marriage to the fair Miss Barclay taking place at Mozufferpore, while Sonepore was in progress. There is nothing worth chronicling as far as the racing is concerned, nobody won and nobody lost much, but the following account of the friendly little gathering which appeared in the *Indian Planters’ Gazette* will give an idea of how the fun of the fair was carried on by the Stewards of 1884 :—

“Brave men struggling against adversity are popularly supposed to be fit spectacles for the gods. Such have been

Messrs. Abbott and Abercrombie in their endeavours to steer the Sonepore Meeting through the shoals and quicksands which have at length overwhelmed it as a first-class meeting. But we doubt very much if a single visitor to the meeting of 1884 can be found to gainsay the general verdict that the change from a first-class to a sky meeting is infinitely for the better. As long as racing was conducted on honorable principles the sportsmen of Behar lent themselves heart and soul to carrying the meeting through, but the malpractices of Mr. Johnny Armstrong met with scant mercy at the hands of this community, and a frequent recurrence of that ubiquitous sportsman's performances has resulted at last in the management dispensing altogether with his attendance, and no one regrets his ostracism from the shady groves of Sonepore. Hence the declension of the gathering to a sky meeting and the right man was in the right place, and his name Arthur Forbes. The result of his labors can be best appreciated by the frequently expressed consensus of opinion that the Behar Planters' Association should exert its utmost influence with Government to render that sporting civilian a permanent institution in Chupra. This could easily be managed for him until his turn comes for the Judgeship at Chupra and Commissionership of Patna. When the climax of a Lieutenant-Governorship falls vacant we shall of course have to bear the heart's wrench of parting; but there is no earthly reason against even a Lieutenant-Governor piloting the Sonepore meet, and we can quite sympathise with the joy with which a Lieutenant-Governor would temporarily divest himself of the cares of state to gambol through a planters' gathering. An old aphorism teaches us to clutch the right man, when found.

"A fortnight is short notice indeed in which to make arrangements for such a week's crowding of events as came off between the 31st October and the 6th November, and the fact that not a hitch occurred throughout, speaks volumes for

the energetic management; but with such men and women on the Committee as Mrs. and Mr. Forbes, Mrs. and Mr. Hugh Llewhellyn, Mr. Gwatkin Williams, Mr. Bob Lockhart, Mr. Nixon, Mr. McLeod, Mr. E. A. Mackintosh, Mr. Boileau, the active Adjutant of the Behar Light Horse, and Mr. Harry Stuart, ubiquitous with the subscription book, success was a foregone conclusion. Quite the most socially pleasant people were got together, and the 51st K.O.L.I. sent a show detachment of sportsmen who supported the meeting in a manner quite in accordance with the traditions of the Regiment, the 6th B. C. provided two guests in Colonel Upperton and Mr. Thompson, and Goruckpore was ably represented by Mr. King of Beoree Factory.

"Proceedings commenced on the night of Thursday, the 30th October, with well attended and signally well supported lotteries, and the next morning saw a concourse of fair women and brave men on the race course. Full details of the racing will be found below. The day was devoted to making calls, and a handicap for a lawn tennis tournament which has been played off daily throughout the week and ended in a well fought victory for Mr. Lee of the Civil Service in the single, and again Mr. Lee aided by Miss Ayers in the double match. Friday evening saw a polo match, *Planters versus The World*, which ended in a draw, each side scoring three goals, and the same night the ball room was filled just sufficiently to admit of uncrowded dancing to the strains of the band kindly lent for the occasion by H.H. the Maharajah of Durbangah. Satiety in the mazy waltz is an impossibility, and the balls came off nightly with an overture on Tuesday in the shape of that sparkling farce 'The Area Belle,' in which Mrs. Joll, assisted by that bright particular star of the Bengal Police, Mr. Fasson and Mr. Hederstedt from Bankipore, stage managed by that specialist Mr. Joll, brought down on themselves thunders of applause from an appre-

ciative audience. On Wednesday evening Chupra played Tirhoot and Chumparun at polo and suffered defeat by one goal to none.

"The fair has been well attended and admirably served by the Tirhoot State Railway, the staff of which had a busy time running several trains full of natives daily, and the heavy traffic should show an appreciable increase in the profits of the line. The horses and ponies brought for sale stood at fair prices. The amusements in the fair were of a varied character, and the usual *tamashas* of this gorgeous land were relieved of their usual monotony by the presence of an Indian Circus, and the Imperial Theatrical Company who gave the melodrama of 'Laili and Mujnoo' (in Hindustani) to a crowded audience, conspicuous among which was a dress circle composed of a party of brutal planters chaperoned by that versatile civilian Mr. Grimley.

"Life unfortunately cannot be all champagne, dancing, racing and lawn tennis, and stern duty necessitated the disposal on Tuesday of the dry monopolists who had nightly or rather morningly made the rafters of the supper room ring with song and mirth, and regularly anticipated the proverbial chanticleer in proclaiming the break of day. But at Wednesday night's supper a grateful reference to the untiring labors of the Honorary Secretary and Mr. Llewhellin and of the fair ladies who double their joys and halve their sorrows, was made in Messrs. McLeod and Williams' speeches, proposing their healths. The thunders of applause from fifty stentorian lungs showed how warmly those labors were appreciated and the "Jolly good fellows," whose health was uproariously drunk and warmly responded to by one of them, Mr. Forbes, must have felt convinced then that they had quite stolen into the hearts of Behar men, amongst whom they live and have their being. They have fully revived the corpse of the Sonapore week and filled that necessary component of the joys of a

planter's life with a health and strength which will give evidence of itself in November 1885."

CHAPTER XXXI.

YEAR 1885.

In 1885 the Jaintpore stable had become a very big one. In addition to Mr. Gasper's strong string, consisting of Regulator, Paragraph, His Lordship, Slander, First Try, The Shrew and Avenger, it had Sting, Aimee, Triplets, Pollio, Noorong, Ned Kelly and Thunderstorm of Mr. Rugnath's; and in July it was joined by Mr. Moore's lot, Rhesus, First Water, Prospect, Nulquine, Red Deer and May Queen, for Gwatkin had left Buhrowlie and gone to take charge of the Durbangah Raj estates in Purneah. Mr. Mullick, a sporting young Calcutta Bengali, had also with Harry Abbott, Sir Greville and two Kernal bred colts, called Greased Lightning and Piecegoods. Very few of these though ran at Sonapore, as sky races were still in favor there, and Lucknow and Calcutta seemed better goods. The stable was heavily hit that year, Clarke went down to Australia to buy a couple of clinkers, and secured two very fine maidens, Conningsby and Gohanna, but he neglected to insure them. The steamer experienced bad weather in mid voyage, and both horses contracted lung disease and died; the first-named cost five hundred guineas. In June died Gilbert Nicolay's good old nag, Red Gauntlet, who, since Arthur Butler first bought him in 1869 for Bob Hills, had been a steady source of income, both to his owners in the way of purses and the Sonapore stewards in entrance money; he was shot as he had got very infirm and mangey. In July we, in Behar, heard with heartfelt sympathy of the death in Calcutta, of one who had been a dear friend to many of us, and whose horses, trained mostly at Lall Serryah, had often got their heads in front at Sonapore and Mozufferpore. *The*

Planters' Gazette, noticing the sad occurrence, wrote as follows :—

“No more genuine and deep expression of profound regret was ever uttered by the whole community, than that which burst universally forth last Wednesday morning, when the sad news of Mr. George Thomas' sudden death was announced in Calcutta. During the many years of his honored career as a member of the popular firm of Messrs. J. Thomas & Co., it can safely be said that he never made an enemy. Strunch as steel ; by his friends—and they were legion—he was beloved as a brother, and even comparative strangers took at once to his courteous manners and gentle bearing. Nature's true gentleman, the kindest and gentlest heart that ever beat in human breast was his, a man who never did an unkind thing, or said an unkind word. Truth and honesty itself, he always saw the world on its brightest and best side, and could not be brought to believe that such a thing as downright badness existed. His place either in his firm, as a most popular member of the community, or as a leading sportsman, will be hard to fill, and his name will for years to come, be mentioned with respect and affection, in the office, and in the social circle, as well as in the clubs, and on the race courses of Ballygunge and Calcutta. To sportsmen he ever set a bright example of pluck and probity ; a good rider himself, probably over a country second to none, no horse ever owned by him but stepped out on the course with the intention of winning, and everyone knew they could back it with perfect confidence. Done to death by that scourge of Calcutta, cholera, while yet in the very zenith of life, for he was only 37 ; the news of his untimely end came like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, upon the startled residents of Calcutta, and shocked them beyond power of description. The seizure was a very sudden one, he had gone to office as usual, but about noon he complained of not feeling very well, and so returned home ; the actual attack

came on in the evening. He was attended by Dr. O'Brien, and as the symptoms got worse, Dr. McConnell was called in, but in spite of these gentlemen's unremitting care, he gradually sank and died about six o'clock the next morning; sincerely mourned, deeply regretted, and affectionately remembered by relatives, friends, planters and sportsmen. Vale, George Thomas the good and true. The memory and the worth of George Thomas will long remain green in the treasured recollections of all who ever came within the influence of the loving charm of the man whose untimely death is sincerely mourned by the entire European community of Calcutta."

In 1885 Arthur Forbes and the same stewards held office again at Sonapore, and the racing was a distinct improvement on the previous year's form. More horses, a better class of them, and more interest taken in a sport that had of late years been somewhat treated as a necessary evil. The results were of a rather mixed description, not altogether favorable to backers, as, for instance, in the Selling Stakes, for which Bluebell was supported in a fashion almost reckless, considering that she was opposed by Seer, a very much improved horse. But the fallibility of human judgment was shown by the despised Badger, belonging to young Dick Llewellyn, making his own running and winning cleverly, while Messrs. Apperley, and Short, on Bluebell and Seer, were waiting for him to come back to them. The bustle consequent on young Lochinvar's improper behaviour towards his young woman, was nothing compared to those two sportsmen's hurrying up in the last hundred yards, and the Principality of Wales must have chortled over the news of Dick Llewellyn's *coup*. Red Deer in the Trial Stakes was good goods, though the Jaintpore stable manfully stood the ancient Triplets. There was some indecision in the Red Deer camp, as to whether their second string Vice Versa—so named from having turned her

former owner, Tim Lockhart, upside down—was not good enough to take the cake; but the absurdity of the idea of a countrybred, however good, beating a waler, was again demonstrated, for although he finished in front of Triplets and Torchlight (who were eased when pursuit of Red Deer was hopeless), he never at any period of the race flattered his backers. In the maiden 13-2 pony race that smart 12-3 pony Jessamine—by far the best piece of goods in Messrs. Fitch and Co's celebrated emporium—showed up the mediocrity of the 13-2 ponies opposed to her, by beating them handsomely. Pulled out again half an hour later in the 13 hand pony race, she was equally successful in disposing of the much-fancied but now broken down Fleur-de-lys.⁶ The result of the maiden countrybred race was a perfect illustration of the difference between public and private form. Greased Lightning had invariably in trials shown his heels to his Jaintpore stable-companion Thunderstorm, and Harry Abbott consequently planked it down manfully on the former, but the wrong one outstayed the slippery one, and the Jaintpore dollars went into the coffers of Jimmy and Baby Canning. Bob Lockhart's stable, however, produced the favorite in Behar, a very blood looking bay, full of quality and very English, but not gifted—unfortunately—with the faculty of going. The second day was better than the first; an easy win of Colleen Bawn's commenced the proceedings, and it was quite in the order of things that the timehonored Behar Stakes should fall to Jimmy's stable. Favorites did not, however, have all the best of it, and the plungers determined to recoup themselves in the countrybred race, for which Vice Versa was thought to be the best of good things. And very happy the said plungers were, until the nags were within three lengths of the winning post, when it was seen that the favorite, who had been running level with the despised Thunderstorm, could not get his head in front of him, and after

a game struggle, Harry's nag caught the judge's eye first by a very short head. General Parrott's Thunder colts had not turned out the success which his other sires' foals had, but Thunderstorm proved the exception. A fine big-boned, up-standing three-year-old colt of undeniable good looks and quality, of perfect temper and with perfect manners, he proved a credit to his breeder. It is seldom that a countrybred of that age will stand the determined riding Thunderstorm got in Bertie Short's hands from the three furlong post home, and make a brilliant effort in reply to the whip at the end of it. In the Selling Stakes those two ancient opponents, Mercedes and Bluebell, met for the fiftieth time, and though the former made a bold bid in front of the stand, she could not quite catch Bluebell, who won cleverly by half a length. Mercedes was far from disgraced. It was just asking the good old mare to do a little too much to concede 7lbs. The 13-2 pony race was an interlude which gave everybbody time to go away and refresh, while the race was being run, as there was not much to be got out of looking on at Billet Doux doing an exercise canter. Some interest was, however, taken in the 13-hand pony race, in which the brilliant Jessamine met that persistent winner Little Dan. The Lall Serryah stable determined to leave no stone unturned to ensure success, and sent out a smart pony in Rogue to make running. They were rewarded for their trouble after a pretty race, but it seemed as if Chapman's call on Jessamine was just a little late.

The third day was devoted to those necessary evils, handicaps. In that for all horses, one mile, the only real malcontent was that brilliant miler, Red Deer, and his owner's representative refused to accept of the heavy impost, 12st.; more in mercy to his horse's legs, than from any idea that he had been harshly treated. Anyhow, welter weights being the order of the day, the handicappers could hardly have put less on him after the way in which he won on the first day.

The other non-acceptors were merely hacks whom it was impossible to bring together with the four who elected to start, and the best criterion of the excellence of the handicap, was the timidity with which these latter were backed, no owner standing more than half his horse in the lotteries. On public form, however, Seer was more than a stone behind Torchlight. Bluebell's ability to get a mile was confessedly a thing of the past, and Triplet's wretched performance on the first day certainly did not justify her sanguine owner in entrusting her with much money. So the talent went for Torchlight. But Triplets, with Apples up, ran a very different mare to what she did the first day, and at the distance, when the favorite apparently had the race in hand, Harry Abbott's old plater sailed past her seemingly without an effort. This was the commencement of a series of upsets, for in a half mile scurry for all horses that had never won, Druid, a hot favorite, went off from a false start, and was ridden for half the distance under the impression that the flag had fallen—an impression, moreover, justifiable by Bertha being raced against him. This, of course, destroyed his chance, but even then no one dreamt that the winner would turn up in another of Harry's stable, the despised countrybred Greased Lightning—despised in fact to such an extent that not a single ticket bearing his name was found in the *pari mutuel* box, whereby the fund benefitted considerably. The time, 52secs., was pretty tall going for a countrybred. Dream was considered by her owner to have an excellent chance for this race, but whatever it was worth was destroyed by Greased Lightning crossing her soon after the start and knocking her off her legs, and it spoke well for Bob Lockhart's good nature that no objection was laid, as evidence was ample to prove the cross. This was followed by a scurry in quarter mile heats for all ponies, and backers were soon put out of their agony, for Ruby's easy win in the first, augured a similar result in the second heat. Speculation on

the Buggy Stakes was very spirited, Badger being supported freely on the strength of his having beaten Seer and Bluebell on the first day, while the Jaintpore stable manfully stood their master's charger, Jerusalem. The winner, however, turned up in Mr. John's hurdle racer Rona, who was of a slightly better class than her opponents, a fact which had entirely been overlooked by everyone but Jimmy. An objection was lodged against her starting in this race, "for all maiden horses," on the ground that she had won over hurdles, but was, of course, overruled by the Stewards. There is no doubt that the intention of the framers was to exclude winners of every description, but anyhow Rona was rightly held eligible. The talent girded up its loins for the next and last encounter of the meeting, a very dangerous one, seeing it was for all ponies bought in the fair. To pick the winner from ten raw country-bred ponies, all pretty much together, and not one standing out pre-eminently from the others, is indeed a tempting of fortune; but a race of this kind has peculiar fascinations, and there was more betting on it than on any of the other races. In the uncertainty lay the fascination. Perrett's Maggie, named after one of that youthful trainer's fiancées, and Jimmy's Fairy, were the great tips, but they had to be content with third and second places respectively, though the latter was not placed, as Ryder failed to draw the weight. A very smart little 12-2 mare Jenny Lind, who, after many false starts, with the crack light-weight Richmond up, got first away, and increasing her lead from the distance, won with great ease.

That good countrybred Jessamine was disposed of by Mr. Chapman for Rs. 1,000 to little Richmond, who resold her for Rs. 1,300 two days later, and she joined Billet Doux in Mr. Luttmann-Johnson's stable. The pair shortly after the meet started for that *ultima thule* of ponies—Assam.

The victory of Thunderstorm over the other local maiden countrybreds, and afterwards over the plater, Vice Versa,

followed up by Greased Lightning beating the waler in the half mile Scurry, time 52secs., was another good advertisement for General Parrott's youngsters.

CHAPTER XXXII.

YEAR 1886.

In 1886 prospects for Sonapore looked poorer than ever, for Jimmy had not added anything of great reputation to his lot, and the Jaintpore stable, which had been joined by the horses of H.H. the Maharajah of Cooch Behar, though more powerful than ever, had only one or two bad enough for a sky meeting; moreover, it got abroad early in the year that Mr. Forbes was certain for promotion, but his successor at Chupra was not known. At last a Mr. Clay was appointed, and the district opinion was, that he would prove of little use, for being on the eve of retiring from the service, he did not want to spend a penny on entertaining. When at first approached and asked to do the proper thing in giving a camp and taking up Arthur's dropped mantle as Secretary of Sonapore, he point blank refused; then the district doggerel bards began to sling ink in the *I.P.G.*, of which the following are specimens:—

NOT THE MAN FOR CHUPRA.

(Air—"The Man for Galway.")

I.

Who thinks Sonapore

An awful bore—

Dislikes the Fair's *gol gopra*—

Who'll nothing know

Of indigo—

He's not the Man for Chupra.

II.

Who little cares
For drill, nor wears
Behar Light Horseman's *kapra*—
Of sticking pig—
Recks not a fig—
He's not the Man for Chupra.

III.

Who shuns the sweets
Of social meets ;
The dances and the supp'r—ah !—
Who thinks small beer
Of Hutwa's cheer—
He's not the Man for Chupra !

IV.

We can but sigh
For days gone by,
When Forbes' hand was upprer—
Oh ! Mister Clay
I grieve to say
You're not the Man for Chupra !

AN APPEAL TO CHUPRA.

If you can't make a brick out of clay
Bestir yourselves, Charley and Rob,
Or there'll soon be the devil to pay
If our Goodwood is not on the job.
There's Judex and Robertson Pughe,
Will give you the best aid they can ;
Motiharee and Dinapore too,
Will all back you up to a man.
'Andsome 'Arry and Jimmy the bold,
Will supply you with racers galore ;
So don't let your meeting be sold,
If clay is not good at Sonepore.

It is only fair to say that the skits against Mr. Clay unearthed from a correspondent of the *I.P.G.*, the following story which shows that the hero of it had plenty of pluck. His apologist wrote :—

“Anent the verses on ‘The Man for Chupra,’ let us look on the scenes which happened when several of us were still at school.

“*Scene I.* A paddy field in Chota Nagpore, around which are gathered three sportsmen from the neighbouring station awaiting the turning out of a leopard or tiger (beast uncertain), which the villagers have reported to have taken refuge therein. The beaters refusing to beat him out, assigning private reasons, one of the sportsmen enters the paddy and looks up the brute. He is promptly charged by a full grown tiger, fires without stopping him, and the next moment is hurled to the ground with his left shoulder well inside the brute’s mouth. A small dog ‘yaps’ at the animal and draws him off, when the wounded man with the assistance of his two companions finishes him off. Several weeks of an unhealing wound, burrowing deep and breaking out afresh, for the four holes left by a tiger’s teeth do not heal up in a hurry, mind you. A trip to sea and a game shoulder left vivid recollections in the mind of ‘the Man for Chupra’ of his first adventure with a tiger on foot.

“*Scene II.* Yet another tiger, a year or so later, reported in the vicinity of a village. Three sportsmen go for him on foot, no elephants available. He charges out of his lair, knocks one of them down and stands on him. ‘The Man for Chupra’ stands his ground and fires at the brute on his comrade’s body, thereby drawing his wrath on himself, and is promptly charged and again hurled to the ground with a nasty bite in his hand, which, however, was partially saved by his rifle butt, which the tiger chewed. This brute was likewise killed, and ‘The Man for Chupra’ is, I suppose,

the one man in India who has been on two separate occasions knocked over by tigers and lived to fight again.

"INSAR."

But we did *not* want a tiger slayer. We wanted an open-handed, genial sportsman to boss our show, and nothing was actually done till September, when Mr. Clay, at last seeing the error of his ways, consented to be a cypher Secretary.

The programme was like those of its two predecessors, purely "Sky." Bad floods in October made the course during that month in an awful state, and it was feared the camping ground would be dangerously damp; but the meeting commenced fairly. The course, which a month previously had been completely under water, was in really splendid order, chiefly owing to the exertions of that most indefatigable of policemen, Mr. Robertson Pughe. He was aided in a great measure by the judicious advice and undoubted prestige of Mr. R. S. Lockhart, a close connection of the sportsman of the same name so well known in those days at Raneegunge as "the well preserved old gentleman." Mr. Clay merely lent his name for the executive to conjure with, but it was not found of much use, as Harry, Bob and "Toast" Macintosh had to do all the work.

The delay in issuing the prospectus no doubt militated against the success of the racing, which happened to be fixed at a time when up-country and Calcutta horses were idle. A crowd of them would have come from Lucknow had earlier intimation been given and racing weights been in vogue. The only thing that did arrive from the capital of Oudh was Mr. F. G. Johnson, who said he had come to ride for Mr. Abbott. He did not, however, take much by his journey, occupying on the first two days that back seat so dear to the humble minded.

Raneegunge was represented by the genial Mr. Roy Campbell, who turned up with his beloved totalisator, without

which he would have been even as a tinkling cymbal, for when he wasn't working it, he was playing on the pianoforte. He was attended by his trusty Lieutenant, Mr. Fiddes Rowe, just returned from the Burma Campaign.

Fields were larger than at the meeting of 1885, owing to the presence of a few more horses from the Jaintpore stable than had attended for two years; the Lall Serryah stable was, of course, a host in itself, and these two contributed most of the entries.

There were three starters only for the first race for all maidens of the day, and Victor, an English colt, imported by Gwatkin and sold to Mr. George Sherman, was installed favorite, on the strength apparently of having been three times defeated at Lucknow. The race was run just to suit his supposed turn of speed, which, however, turned out to be a myth, for he was never in the hunt with a couple of hacks, and the winner turned up in Robin from the Lall Serryah stable, who just managed to get home a head in front of Sweet Home, an Irish mare of Rowland's, who would, however, have won in another six strides.

A stupid pony race followed, in which Edith sternchased Rowland for half a mile; then old Bluebell appeared as usual in a selling race and simply romped home in front of Jack in the Green, Dream, Badger and Song, the latter, however, pulling up lame after going a hundred yards. A thirteen-hand maiden pony race wound up the morning's proceedings, and fell to the Chupra stable, as these races generally did in those days, for good old Bob always had a dark pony or two.

A change came over the spirit of the lotteries on the second day's racing, merely because there happened to be a race which was not considered a certainty for one horse. The result was that men fought for dice boxes and clamoured for more lotteries, which proved that if Sonepore could only hold out any inducement to outside stables, their owners could at

any rate back their horses if so inclined. Six started for the All-Horse Race, and public opinion was undecided as to whether Keswick, Caractacus or Goonambie was the plum, so four lotteries quickly filled up, at the end of which opinion was still as undecided as ever. However, we knew all about it in the morning, how Caractacus, a screw and short of work, tired after leading his field a brilliant dance for half a mile, how the weight, 10st. 11lbs., told its tale on the long barrelled Keswick, (at least Johnny said so,) and how the cart horse Goonambie wore the field down and won easily at the end. The next three races were uninteresting; Rowland cantered in, in front of a polo pony, on Breach of Promise. Vice Versa did the same with Chloe, and Rogue followed suit in a thirteen-hand pony race, in which his owner had declared him to win from his stable-companion, Little Dan. But the Buggy Stakes resuscitated interest, Jerusalem, Ned Kelly and Ringleader were the trio, each of them was fancied, Jerusalem most; backed by his owner, he ran last, and Ringleader won easily, and then everyone remembered how he once ran a good second at a Mozufferpore Meeting and cursed themselves for not having remembered it before.

The third day's racing was not of an interesting character; after the half mile scurry had been decided and which Keswick won very easily, and opinion was divided as to whether he ought not to have beaten Goonambie in the mile race the first day.

In the 13-2 pony race, Little Hercules was in receipt of 21lbs., and had no difficulty in disposing of Rowland. He did not run off the course on this occasion. Rogue placed the thirteen-hand pony race to Jimmy's credit, and the meeting wound up with a race for all ponies purchased in the fair—a very open affair, more open in fact than yearling races used to be at home, for all these animals were of course untrained, though most of them had been spun against some reliable trying tackle, or against

the watch the day before, when being bought. The winner turned up in Rowland's nomination, a very good-looking pony indeed, purchased for him by Jimmy at the commencement of the fair; a fourteen-hand investment of Frank Johnson's, running second.

Then men began to talk of next Sonepore Meeting, and various suggestions were made, which culminated in Harry Abbott putting up a notice to the effect, that With a view to induce owners of horses to attend, it was proposed to offer a very liberal prospectus for the following year including a purse of Rs. 3,000 for all ponies. The following gentlemen kindly consented to form a committee of management :—Messrs. F. M. Halliday, J. Boxwell, E. A. Mackintosh, W. Macgregor, J. Harrison, D. B. Allen, R. Lockhart with H. E. Abbott as Honorary Secretary, and a first-class prospectus to suit all conditions of horses was to be issued within the next month.

This notice was discussed by a select committee at the second supper on the last ball night, when Mr. D. B. Allen was called upon to make some suggestions for the amelioration of the meeting. He pointed out that the visitors to Sonepore might be divided into two classes, the racing division and those who came to pic-nic, play tennis and look for wives. The latter class, however, in not according sufficient support to the former by attending lotteries and taking tickets, he said, overlooked the fact that without races there would be no Sonepore at all, and that as racing is impossible without lotteries, they were to blame for withholding that support. But on the other hand, each party had its duties towards the other, and so the racing men must not expect the pic-nickers to fill up lotteries without being prepared to allow them to back their fancies, instead of glaring at them with venomous looks when they bid up horses (they should be satisfied with claiming half their horses), and so give the pic-nickers a chance of sharing in the profits of winning horses. Now this was

common sense, a quality which has always characterised all Mr. D. B. Allen's utterances, and if owners could only be induced to act up to it, they would have no cause to complain that it is impossible to back their horses. Owners must be content with small profits at small meetings. Mr. D. B. Allen's speech ought to have been inscribed in letters of gold and hung up for guidance of all attending lotteries. This meeting was responsible for the future of four very popular members of the district, for Miss Ayres elected to be guided in double harness by Mr. Sproggins Mackenzie and Miss Richardson carried by storm the heart of the Adonis of the district, once the best looking Etonian of his year, Mr. Edward Hall of the Mozufferpore Bar. These engagements were whispered about towards the end of the meeting, and the marriages came off during the ensuing year at Chupra and Mozufferpore. Since then Mr. and Mrs. Hall have done much for Mozufferpore, for years Mrs. Hall has managed the ball suppers economically and well, and this is nowadays no light task; while the new ball-room and other improvements are mainly due to the interest taken in the Station Club by Mr. Hall and his energy in obtaining subscriptions. More power to your elbow, Sammy. Just as it was with her large-hearted mother, so is it with Mrs. Hall; she works unselfishly and indefatigably for the public weal, but her real worth will only be honestly acknowledged when she has left the district, and then when it will be impossible to find an equally devoted slave to others, she will be accorded that recognition which ought in common gratitude to have been yearly offered her while with us.

Cholera made its appearance in the European Camp during the meet and carried off three or four servants and one of the Durbangah Band. The matter was kept very quiet, so that only a few were any the wiser, and certainly no one was any the worse, except, of course, those unfortunates chiefly concerned. Luckily the scourge did not spread to the native part of the fair.

A cricket match, which had been much talked about, did not come off after all. Everything was ready, Public Schools *versus* The World, and a really good pitch made. But when some one prompted by an insane curiosity asked where the cricketing gear was, the only reply he got was, Where? Then ensued a lot of hurrying and scurrying and after much telegraphing the gear turned up at 2 P.M., and then, of course, it was too late to commence. So the one cricket match in the year, which was then customary to be played in Behar, did not come off.

Music was plentiful and very good it was. Frank Johnson's lovely voice, then at its best, was a treat to listen to. The good-looking hard-riding scamp of an ex-Hussar is now stumping America with a sort of Moody and Sankey show, his sweet tenor voice, still unimpaired, drawing crowds. Fancy Johnny singing Psalms and Hymns. The Durbangah Band had been steadily improving under its grand old leader, Mr. Armour. Lobo's String Band did duty at the dances and very perfectly they played.

Polo was plentiful, but only one match was played—Mr. McLeod's Camp *versus* The World. Mr. McLeod's Camp consisted of Mr. Rowland Hudson, Mr. Apperley, Mr. M. H. Mackenzie and Dr. Roderick McLeod, while The World composed Mr. H. Collingridge, Mr. G. Collingridge, Mr. J. Hodding and Mr. Fenton. The game was won by the Camp by three goals to one. Jimmy McLeod's absence from the field being fully accounted for by his arm in a sling arrangement.

No necessity to chronicle the fact that tennis was in full swing throughout the meeting. But one big match was made in blind confidence in the superiority of Messrs. Jenkyns, C.S., and Jack Lewis of Motihari, over Messrs. Pereira of Chumparun and Fenton of Chupra. Six to four on the former was the opening price offered by the civilian book-

makers, but that was soon swallowed up, and their Camp was soon besieged by crowds of planters who wanted to get on at any price, and wound up by offers to lay odds on Pereira and Fenton, but these offers were unheeded. The match was very soon over, as was only natural, when Mr. Pereira, one of the best back court players in India with a lightening service, and Fenton, as smart up at the net as they make them, met two very average opponents. First set, six to one; second set, six to two, and the tale is told.

It was a mystery at that Sonepore what used to become during the middle of the day of one of the principal officers of the Thibet Mission, the great Mr. Paul, who had visited the fair, nominally to meet his old Behar friends, till, by chance, some of us, from curiosity, entered one of the many booths on the wayside, in which the gentle Jews turn an honest penny and there he was, he the *debonair* bachelor, the beloved of Darjeeling maidens, doing a roaring trade, disposing by auction of surplus tooth brushes and sponges, thrown on Government by the failure of that ill-fated mission. We left him just as he had stuck an unwashed Rajah with 13 dozen of the former useful articles at six pie each, and with a smile illuminating his speaking countenance for he had received a wire announcing he had got the district his soul yearned for, Darjeeling; but a tear stood in his eye for a careless chuprassie had let down the parcel containing the last lot of gum scrapers bang on his gouty toe. Let us draw a veil over the rest of the scene. St. Paul's Jorbatton to the Corinthians was nothing to what that chuprassie received. Among other visitors to the meeting was Colonel Macnaghten, a brother of Edmond's, who was on the look out for remounts for his regiment. As ill luck would have it his men, without asking anyone in authority where to put his tent, selected a vacant spot between two small hill tents, in one of which was located Frank Johnson, and in the other the irrepressible Bertie Short. On the morning after

the second night's lotteries, the Colonel wrote Harry Abbott a note saying he wished to see him particularly. On arriving, Harry asked the old gentleman what he could do for him. "I must have my tent moved," was the answer. "I have put up for two days and nights uncomplainingly with the frightful language used by the two awful men whose tents are on either side of mine, but after what occurred last night I must remove to some safer spot. About an hour after you had closed the lottery rooms I heard the most frightful shrieks and cries of murder from Mr. Framji's dining tent, and on rushing over there, I saw those two terrible men dressed only in their night clothes, but each with a huge carving knife in his hand, chasing poor Mr. Framji round and round the dining table, and they were within an inch of catching him, when on seeing me he fell at my feet, and claimed protection. 'Gentlemen, gentlemen, I said,' 'what has this inoffensive man done to be thus treated?' What they said, Mr. Abbott, I refrain from repeating; but I gathered from them, that they had been refused supper, and in default of that they intended to devil and eat the poor Parsee. I asked Mr. Framji why he had refused to provide them with supper. He replied, that by your orders, he closed his bar punctually at one o'clock, and, moreover, it was not easy to get his accounts settled with these gentlemen. 'Base is the slave that pays' shouted out Mr. Short, 'just you tell him old' I again spare your ears, Mr. Abbott, 'that we'll wreck his whole show if we don't get some ham fried in champagne for supper.' Fearing they might proceed to carry out their threat, I told Mr. Framji, if he would supply their wants I'd speak to you, report their conduct, and see him protected from further violence. I then left, though they were most pressing in their wishes that I should join them. I had scarcely gone to sleep when I heard them returning more boisterous than ever, and I feared they might take it into their heads to play tricks on my tent, but to

my intense satisfaction, I heard them grope their way to their own tents, yet not to go to sleep. No! they kept on reminding one another with yells and shrieks of laughter of the different smart tricks they had played the public at diverse race meetings in their career, interlarding their astonishing reminiscences with the most fearful language; and only an hour ago did they cease talking." Harry soothed the old gentleman and had his tent put out of danger, but his lecture to the delinquents had not the smallest effect on the pair of mad-caps. There is another story of poor Bertie's love for practical joking which convulsed the district with laughter that year, and which is too good not to be chronicled. Bertie was veritably a *bête noir* to Mr. Rigby, Manager of the Tirhoot State Railway, for he would sometimes travel on the top of the train, sometimes on the engine, sometimes under the seat, and all for sheer devilry, and was always playing some new prank or other; he was adored by the European guards and drivers, but dreaded with holy horror by the Bengali Station Masters who looked on him as a "pucca shaitan."

This is his own account of the story I allude to, written to Harry Abbott during the latter's absence at Meerut, and published by him in the *I.P.G.*—

DEAR MASTER,—If "Sporting Notes" are a bit meagre this week it is owing to my time having been taken up in preparing my defence. The boss of the Tirhoot State Railway is running me in for having attempted to revive that closer *rapprochement* between the English and natives, which used to exist in the ante-Mutiny days and the absence of which is so universally regretted by all writers on the subject of social reform. The Station Master at Motipore is my medium for the receipt of Macgavin's Whisky (for my own consumption) and Neurasthenipponskelesterizo (for the Jaintpore stable). He most unaccountably took umbrage at my mode of addressing him, and forwarded my communication to that toffiest

of Traffic Superintendents, Mr. Newcomen, with the dire threat that all traffic would be suspended unless I was chucked. The following are the appendices to the Station Master's report :—

Exhibit A.

Mighty Baboon.

Please send my case of whisky.

Exhibit B.

Son of a Cow Buffalo.

Please send me my case of whisky.

Exhibit C.

Mystic offspring of a post-pliocene protoplasm,

Please forward me my case of whisky.

Exhibit D.

Obtusest of parallelogrammatic Aryans,

Please forward that van load of Neurasthenippo-skelesterizo.

Farewell my Baboo of the rotund seat.

The toffy one, like Venus with her "sprete injuria formæ," fired up at my supposed reflection on the good looks of the T.S.R. Staff, and has worried the bosses into threatening to "rub it in" under some section of a pestilent work entitled "the Penal Code,"—the "it" being, I presume, the ullaged oil used to light the stations. But I have been misunderstood as if I had Gibbonsed or Trailled the Station Master. "Baboon" is the English for Hanooman, that great Hindoo god. Now you never feel insulted when I call you a little god, and Newky showed no signs of displeasure when Miss—but there I *must* draw a veil over that scene. For addressing the Aryan as "son of a cow buffalo," I have the authority of "Ali Baba," who said that the Lama told him that a virtuous cow hippopotamus by metempsychosis might, under unfavourable circumstances, become an undergraduate of the Calcutta University, and that, when patent leather shoes and English supervened, the thing was a Baboo. Besides, the cow is an object of veneration.

tion amongst Baboos. As regards Exhibit C. I am quite of Professor Darwin's opinion. Exhibit D is a term of endearment. So you will see that I'm a martyr to the T.S.R. Inquisition. However, I'm going to run the Gasper in my interests, and all he asks is drinks, because addressing a jury is provocative of thirst. He won't touch Macgavin. These barristers of superior calibre never look at anything but Ayala. This necessitates a sale of property, and as Messrs. Balmer, Lawrie & Co. won't give tick for advertisements, I hereby give notice that I've got a set of English harness in perfect order, a Boyce and Rogers' 7lb. steeplechase saddle, and half a bottle of Gout Pills for sale—Rs. 100 the lot. I shan't have any use for the two former in Alipore unless they let me out for the Calcutta Grand Annual, and the jail diet don't run to gout. BERTIE THE WRITTED.

On the day the case was fixed the Mozufferpore Police Court was crowded with Europeans to see the fun, and Bengali Baboos mustered in hundreds. The Railway employed a pleader to prosecute, Bertie defended himself, making use chiefly of the absurd arguments quoted in his letter to Harry. Poor Tute, the Magistrate, who, like all Irishmen, had a keen sense of the ludicrous, was obliged to keep his eyes on the desk to refrain from exploding with laughter; as for the Europeans in court, it was useless trying to restrain their cachinations. At last Tute said, "There, that will do Mr. Short, your intention to annoy and insult is too evident; you are fined ten rupees." But now came the best part of the story, fiddling about in his pockets Bertie said, "I'm very sorry Sir, but I've left my purse on the piano at home, would you very kindly lend me the amount." With a sickly smile Tute turned to his Sheristadar, and told him to give Mr. Short ten rupees, which sum Bertie graciously handed to the clerk, stepped jauntily out of the box, and as he expressed himself, left the court without a stain upon his character; but Tute

whistled for that money, and got frightfully chaffed into the bargain.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

YEAR 1887.

If the appointing of a civilian like Mr. Clay to a sporting centre, casts a damper on all social gatherings, the reverse is the case when a good fellow is gazetted, and it was a relief to all supporters of Sonepore when in 1887 we knew Mr. Jim Bourdillon was to be Collector of Chupra and Hamilton Gordon, Judge, for both were certain to back up the meeting warmly. On the 15th August, at Harry Abbott's request the Stewards held a meeting at Mr. Bourdillon's house, Chupra, at which the majority of the European residents and stewards were present. Harry read to the meeting a vast amount of correspondence, including letters from Lord William Beresford and other sportsmen, promising cordial support to the meeting as far as horses went, and also letters from Calcutta merchants giving royal assistance in the way of prizes. The funds being shown to be in a satisfactory state, it was resolved to increase the value of several of the purses, and as the correspondence handed in showed that many owners of stables grumbled at the short notice given, the original dates fixed for first entries were postponed till 15th September. The dates selected for the races ran the fixture so close on to Lucknow as to leave insufficient time for horses to reach Sonepore after running at the Oudh capital, the Stewards, therefore, sanctioned the meeting being postponed to Friday 4th, Monday 7th and Wednesday 9th, November. Later postponement was impossible, for the native fair began breaking up about the 5th, and as many of the local residents go to Sonepore quite as much on business as for pleasure, the receipts would be affected detrimentally if the fair and the races were not fixed simultaneously. The postponement had besides the advantage

accorded to racing men, a considerable accession of comfort to European visitors, for the fair would be cleared of a very considerable proportion of the once-a-year-washed but still unsavoury native devotee. Moreover, dealers in that sort of pony and screw, which none but an Aryan would purchase, would have taken their ewe-necked, cow-hocked, donkey-hoofed, sore backed abominations away. So that far less time would be lost by those needing serviceable hacks in searching out their requirements. Mr. Robertson Pughe agreed to take up the duties of clerk of the course, Mr. Gordon volunteered to judge, while the starter's flag was voted to Captain Adamson. Mr. George Llewhellin was asked to take charge of the scales, a task which he had for so many years successfully carried through at Sonapore. The Civilians' and Planters' Cup was changed into the Merchants' Cup with an increase of Rs. 500 to its value and somewhat modified terms. The *bonnes bouches* for horses and ponies were shown to be exceptionally handsome for a Mofussil meeting. Over Rs. 7,000 was guaranteed for the three days' racing. The entries promised well, and a jubilee race, value Rs. 500, for all assistants' ponies, induced a crowd of aspirants to enter.

The Jaintpore stable had received two heavy blows during the year, first, game little Sting's dropping dead in the Viceroy's Cup, and taking away much of the pleasure of the stable's win with Mr. Gasper's Mercury. It was, of course, a great feather that three of the Jaintpore horses finished, one of them, Mercury, first with Sting and Sir Greville dead heat for third place in the race of the year, but there is no doubt Clarke sacrificed Sting to Mercury. Time after time ere Harry Abbott reached Calcutta, Sting and Aimee were pulled out to ask Mercury the question, and the undue exertion naturally told heavily on the old champion. When passing the old stand, half a mile from home, Sting faltered and stumbled, and then he must have had the first seizure; perhaps had he been pulled up then by his

jockey, Thompson, he would have lived to gallop again. Before the race Harry had warned Mr. Gasper that the horse he had to fear was Sting, and when it is remembered that after his first seizure this game little son of Grandmaster and Queen Bee finished three lengths off the winner, level with Sir Greville, to whom he could always concede two stone easily, Harry's warning was not unwarranted. Like many good horses Sting would not bother himself in private trials, but with the colors up he was a lion, as his glorious death proved. This was a knock with a vengeance, but Jaintpore got it worse later on. Infatuated with Clarke after winning the Cup, Mr. Gasper sent him down to Australia, with Rs. 15,000 to bring up another Cup horse, as Mercury had been sold to Lord Bill after winning everything he started for, for Rs. 10,500, just the money he cost landed in India. His friends begged Gasper not to send cash down with Clarke, but to lodge the money in a bank and to make it payable only when the receipt for the horse's price was submitted by the seller, and the Agent was assured there was no hankey pankey. Alec Clarke was a good-hearted lad, and a very painstaking, experienced trainer, but it was putting a terrible temptation into the hands of a man of his position, to let him go on board a P. and O. boat with Rs. 15,000 of his employer's money and some Rs. 5,000 odd of his own savings and presents. It was a case of women, cards and wine. First one of the stewardesses got hold of him and bled him fairly well. On landing he played the swagger millionaire, and had to pay through the nose, then, whilst looking for a horse, he fell amongst Teddy Weekes and kindred spirits of that calibre, and lost a big slice of the money entrusted to him at cards. Instead of then and there going to any of Harry Abbott's Melbourne friends and making a clean breast of it, or wiring to his employer, he went the whole hog to recoup his losses, of course with the inevitable result. He then finished up with boozing as long as any-

one would stand him liquor, and eventually went to the gutter, so when Mr. Gasper returned from his trip to England, and went straight to Jaintpore to see his new horse, all he saw were extracts from Melbourne sporting papers hinting at what really had happened. So Sonepore in spite of the vaunts made at the supper table the previous meeting, did *not* promise big licks in the racing line, for Jimmy had no new plums and Gwatkin not a ghost of a gee. Mr. Gasper had made Harry a present of a very neat little Australian filly called Edith, which the latter had fallen in love with at Weekes' sale. She was small, but very breedy, with perfect action, and she proved the soundness of his judgment 'by winning him a very big lump at Lucknow, where she beat the speedy Cuba, having sold in five lotteries each of a thousand rupees, at an average of Rs. 100, backed by Harry in all. So this mare with Major Prior's Nereus and Caulfield and Mr. Mullick's Sir Greville, Miss King and his countrybreds, all at Jaintpore, were about the only decent first class nags in the local stables.

The much considered, long talked of, and from which so much was hoped, meeting came and went; and in the retrospect thereof the Stewards may be credited with having scored an undoubted success. Divided, to suit racing men, rather too long from the native fair, merely holiday folk and strangers lost much that was novel and much that was curious, but the sporting part of the community gained by the comparative quiet obtained in consequence, and settling down to work made racing the order of the day throughout.

The compact character of the English camp and its contiguity to the course and ball room rendered locomotion comparatively easy, for there was no absolute necessity of tum-tums or ticca garries, and the furthest camp was barely a quarter of a mile from the course. Mozufferpore, Chumparun and the 17th N.I. had each a camp. Hospitable little Chupra

brought no less than three, and that local celebrity, Tom the barber. By the kindness of Captain Wedderburn, the band of the 17th played everywhere through the meeting, not only at the races and evening drive, in turn with H.H. the Maharajah of Durbangah's, but was sent to enliven the dinners of the various camps. The racing was good, and the lotteries filled well, notably those in the pony race on the third day, no less than six were filled for that fancied little scrimmage. Outside owners should have gone away contented, for local stables could by no means be accused of having snatched all the plummy bits of the cake for themselves. On the first day Perrett's Victor claimed the Behar Stakes, Mr. Mullick's Piecegoods the Bettiah Cup, Lord W. Beresford's Little Nell the Merchants' Cup and Mr. Gregory's Rescue the *Indian Planters' Gazette* Purse. For the home department the Chumparun division topped the list handsomely, and Harry Abbott carried away the Durbangah Cup with his good little Edith, named after his daughter.

Polo was rather a failure, owing to the ground being in bad order, but as the Stewards promised to make the inside of the course one huge bowling green for the next year, the only growl heard during the meet was soon smothered.

The balls went off splendidly, the floor being in excellent order and the attendance large, over 150 sitting down to supper, excellently well supplied on all three nights by Messrs. Framjee, who deserved a ticket of "Highly Commended" for their exertions. The same firm kept their usual capital refreshment tent in a snug corner of the paddock, just beyond the Grand Stand, a first rate situation where the campless were catered for, and all necessary comforts provided.

To while away the mornings of the off days, and seduce the weary from their afternoon siesta, those inevitable camp followers itinerant merchants called as usual at the tents, and displayed the gorgeous fabrics of Indian looms, brass work

from Benares and Lucknow, inlaid ware from Agra, and jewellery from Delhi. Besides these, vendors of furs, wicker work chairs and tables, canaries and fruit, all were there. Wonderful Indian jugglers with improvised entertainments, and cobras and mongooses, and a clever company of performing birds, who threaded beads, told numbers, played cards, loaded and fired real cannons, and flew at word of command to any member of the audience pointed out, and offered a pouncet box of sweet scent for a smell. Mr. Worby, the Mozufferpore tailor, opened a branch establishment for receiving orders, and fixing up the members of the Behar Light Horse creditably as lady killers at the balls; and Mr. Aldham from Fry and Rahn's was there to take all their pictures. The one accident of the meeting occurred to Sergeant Haslem who, while riding a horse of Mr. Drake's, was thrown by the animal putting his foot in a hole and coming down heavily. Sergeant Haslem unfortunately broke his collar-bone, which was set shortly afterwards by Dr. Mulvaney.

It was most most regrettable that Mr. Gwatkin Williams was attacked with fever during the meeting, and he was greatly missed the last two days, it was with evident difficulty he dragged himself to the races on the second day. Fired by Harry Abbott's admirable speech in proposing at supper on the 9th the health of Jimmy McLeod, the *King of Chumparun*, the members of the Chupra elocutionary class held a *seance* after breakfast the following day, in the Sitalpore Camp, for the purpose of proposing healths and returning thanks for the same. All the speeches were much admired; and though the "guileless gillie" was not present to increase the favourable impression made on a former occasion, the ladies followed his advice and improvised a gallery whence, as is the habit in Calcutta on St. Andrew's day, they might listen to the orations. Need it be said that Harry Abbott in proposing the health of a future bride and bridegroom was vociferously applauded, or

that Bob Lockhart, when he made his effort, brought down the tent, and tears into the eyes of all his audience—with laughter. But the honors of the occasion were evidently given to that promising young *debutant*, Harry Russell, whose famous speech in returning thanks for the ladies will be long remembered by all who heard it. Called upon after dinner to champion the same great cause, he replied in terms of equal eloquence and ability, and it was difficult to decide of the two speeches which was the superior. Chupra is always very hard to beat and its coming men were very well forward that year.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

YEAR 1888.

Prospects looked decent for 1888 as Jimmy had sent down instructions to Teddy Weekes at Melbourne to buy him a really good horse, and the selection was a fine young bay gelding called Knightsbridge. He had also Torchlight, now Baby Canning's property, and Rowland's Harlequin, a rattling good waler pony called Wagunyah and another called Catseye. Harry's stable had lost Mr. Mullick's string; the sporting young Bengali had died and his horses had to go to Calcutta to be sold. Harry offered ten thousand for them, but the offer was rejected. Ere the eventual sale, Edith died of apoplexy in Calcutta, Miss King sold for twelve hundred to a sportsman who never took delivery, Piecegoods went for seven hundred Sir Greville broke down and only fetched five or six hundred, Keswick about the same. Major Prior's string, however, replaced Mr. Mullick's, and Mr. Apcar's horses summered that year at Jaintpore, as well as Mr. Gasper's, the latter now racing in partnership with Mr. Apcar, though, save Splendor, none of the string ever ran again at any of the Behar meetings. That beauty Bellona had died from kidney disease. The Stewards were out as early as May with a liberal programme. The Stewards for the year were Messrs. H. W. Gordon, Robertson

Pughe, George Walker, J. Bourdillon, W. B. Hudson, W. Elliott, R. Brown, E. A. Mackintosh, M. P. Gasper, S. Llewellyn, Captain Renton, and Majors St. Paul and Prior, with Harry Abbott, Honorary Secretary; they had now for two years sensibly gone back to open to all programmes.

Some years before this there were four or five meetings yearly held in Behar, at most of which the majority of events were open, and meetings not being so numerous, horses from all parts turned up to compete. To cope with these, first one and then a second, and a third local stable sprang into existence, and held their own fairly enough with the outsiders; of course they collared the best of the local prizes, and deservedly so, for their horses were well selected and systematically trained. But the opening up of larger meetings nearer to the direct lines of railway, where better purses were offered and much more money obtainable from lotteries and bookmakers, caused a falling-off of outside horses at most of the Behar meetings, and, consequently, the racing was left chiefly to the three or four local stables. Then shortly afterwards a cry was raised by the youngsters of the district of "This is all skittles, we don't want to see Harry and Gwatkin and Jimmy ringing the changes race after race. Why should we not have a share?" To please them an entire change of programme was made at Mozufferpore. Sonapore followed in its wake, but the result was chaos. Gya, Chupra and Motihari virtually died out. Mozufferpore struggled a year or two longer and then demised as a first class fixture, but the Sonapore men were sensible enough to see the folly of their ways, and by offering even a more liberal programme than in the days of yore, have gradually brought their meeting round, and, in fact, it now stands the only first class meeting in Behar. What chiefly militates against local amateurs racing nowadays is, that our boys have neither the nags nor the money to race with, polo takes all their spare cash.

In spite of a liberal prospectus, very few first class walers turned up at Sonepore, the Hyderabad meeting clashing with it, and the Cawnpore fixture following so shortly afterwards, prevented many owners from attending, but a goodly number of countrybreds, ponies, and second class Australians put in an appearance. Fraser, the trainer, brought a big string from Calcutta including the patched up old gelding Sir Greville, Mr. Rowe's Minette, and a few other useful cracks of sorts. Jimmy had a large string, all looking fit and will; among them his newly-imported colt Knightsbridge, who had improved wonderfully since landing. Ryder was now first jock for Lall Serryah. Harry Abbott had three beautiful countrybreds—Melody, The Toff and Sairey Gamp. Dunn arrived on Thursday with Lord William's Shamshad, and everyone thought the Merchants' Cup must be a moral for this handsome grey Arab, but early on Friday morning, the astute Fordham was seen walking across the course, followed by a carefully clothed pony, who, on closer inspection, turned out to be the invincible Blitz. It was indeed a feather in the Stewards' caps and a fitting reward for the generosity of the Calcutta merchants, that such grand ponies as Blitz, Shamshad and Minette should come to do battle for their cup. The Behar Stakes fell through and the Hutwa Cup, not finding sufficient maidens to fill it, was altered to a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile scurry, open for all horses. Seven of the handsomest countrybreds in India stripped for General Parrott's Purse, every one of them bred at the Karnaul Stud, and in looks seeming fit to meet any average waler on even terms. The Zillah Stakes brought out five. The Lilliputs, the first race on the card, was appropriated easily by Mr. John's Catseye, with Rowland Hudson in the saddle; then came the Hutwa Cup, for which both at the lotteries and the lists, Bon Accord and Sir Greville, were served up hot favorites, but the old bay fidgetted a good deal at the post, it did not seem as if Thompson was fit to ride him; the lad had scarcely re-

covered from the effects of a bad fall at Poona, and Sir Greville was one of the hardest horses in the country to hold together. They get off fairly well together, and Bon Accord and Rowland's Padlock, lying side by side, ran a really great race, the English horse astonishing everyone by the game way in which he stuck to the speedy black, who won all out by a bare length. Then came *the* race of the day, the Karnaul Stakes; Splendor for power and size, perhaps the pick of the basket, was decidedly the favorite. Melody only went for fifteen rupees in each lottery, though his owner made no secret that he fully expected to win with him. Melody was a beautiful bright chestnut with the white points and blaze of Blair Athol, he was greatly admired, as also was Sairey Gamp, a fine raking filly, who had much of the cut-and-come-again looks of her half sister Eunice. The Toff, a very pretty little colt but small; Tete-a-Tete, handsome but scarcely looking the class of the rest. Harlequin, trained to a hair, had improved wonderfully on his last year's form. After one or two breaksaway, they were let go level, save Melody, who lost several lengths at the start. Splendor led them a regular cracker to the home turn, and was well in front of his field to the distance, where he began his old tricks and, being collared by Harlequin and Sairey Gamp, completely shut up; just before this Melody had joined his horses and a grand race was now seen. Opposite the stand, Melody was half a length ahead, but owing to Thompson's weakness, Ryder managed to catch him on the post, and by really fine riding got Harlequin home by the shortest of heads, Sairey Gamp a good third; the rest pulled up. The Zillah Stakes was thought to be a certainty for a well-bred little piece of stuff, Exchange, but he was never in it, and the race was won easily by Pat, who simply romped home in front of a straggling field. This ended a capital day's sport.

All woke up on the 20th November with a feeling that

some great event was to take place; the cannon made even more noise than usual, and the Band rose to the occasion and played "We all Love Jack" with more sweetness and light than they ever managed before, and all in honor of Blitz; needless to say everyone turned up at the race stand with punctuality. The first race on the card was for the Bettiah Cup, for countrybreds and Arabs, and four of General Parrott's breeding went to the post, Sairey Gamp in receipt of a stone from Harlequin, being favorite, but after a really good race between these two the mare had to put up with a short head defeat; Young Manchester, as usual, led the field for the first half mile. The Durbangah Cup unfortunately fell through, so the second race was the Merchants' Cup. Shamshad was the first to appear, and a real beauty he looked, good enough to back for one's last dollar, if he had not been followed by Blitz, ridden by Greenhalgh. This was the first opportunity many of the sportsmen present had of interviewing this Ormonde amongst ponies, and though one is always disposed to see beauty in a good horse, there can be no doubt that Blitz was a perfect picture of an Arab racing pony, a gentleman all over from nose to tail. Blitz and Shamshad walked down to the post together, followed by Minette and Ameer, and this was the order they preserved throughout the race, Blitz winning hard held, in the commonest of canters; he was honored after the race by the Band striking up "See the conquering hero comes," and by all the ladies coming down to inspect him, and he showed his appreciation of their visit in the most gracious manner, allowing himself to be petted with equanimity. After this came the Selling Race, which was looked upon as a moral for Mr. Canning's Torchlight, who had a great pull in the weights. It would have been a wonder if the handsome old black did not manage to score a win. She did not disappoint her backers, winning fairly easily, but she was not claimed, even at the scarcely exorbitant price of

nil, which her owner put upon her. This clemency was due to her owner having such a silvery tongue and persuasive manners. The fourth race brought out a field of seven very good looking ponies belonging to Assistants; Breach of Promise and Little Hercules being the most fancied, the Jaintpore crack, Nellie, not coming in for the support that her reputation deserved. After three false starts, they all got off together, and nothing was in it up to the distance with Asthore, who had the race in hand, till she broke down and was eased off. From the distance post, Breach of Promise and Little Hercules came away by themselves, till near the stand Greenhalgh, on the outsider, Beauty, managed to get up and win by half a length all out; Little Hercules a short nose in front of Breach of Promise. The race, however, was not of the swiftest, as the owner of the second objected to Beauty, on the ground that her owner had not registered his assumed name, and this being found a fact, Little Hercules was awarded the race. This was very hard luck on Mr. Adlam, a good sportsman, who deserved a win; and so ended a good day's racing.

The third day—handicaps—promised exceedingly good sport; the lotteries had been well supported over night and everyone came to the scratch smiling, and determined to win a lot of money. The first race was a half mile Handicap for countrybreds, Tete-à-Tete on paper having a good look in, but his owner after the first lottery stated that he was only to go to the post, so punters had to look for another favorite. Harlequin was undoubtedly the pick of the handicap, after Tete-à-Tete, receiving as he was ten pounds from the harshly treated cur Splendor, and being at the same weight as the green colt Melody, whom he had beaten at three-quarters of a mile in the Karnaul Purse on the first day; and sure enough, win he did, though only by half a length, from the much improved Sairey Gamp, who seemed to thrive on work. Next came a pony handicap, which was an exercise canter for

Minette, Jimmy's Wagunyah securing second money. Then came the turn up of the meeting—the "P.I.G." Purse—Torchlight was in it (and very well in it apparently), giving seven pounds to the very moderate Jubilee, and fourteen pounds over weight for class to Young Manchester, who was some three stone worse than Harlequin; so the black waler was made a strong favorite, and supported by her owner with the bookies at 2 to 1 on. The countrybred looking as handsome as paint and ridden by old Abdul, led out at such a pace, that Ryder had to commence riding Torchlight at the half mile post, Jubilee never being in it; the game old mare answered to every call and crept up inch by inch, and opposite the stand was as nearly as possible level; the white-headed old native, however, did not lose his head, and riding capitally just managed to land first past the post by a short head. The last race on the card brought out three ponies, the countrybred mare, Breach of Promise, being handicapped to give her two waler adversaries seven pounds. This seemed to be distinctly rough on her, but her owner, Jack Lewis, being a real good sportsman, determined to let her run; game mare as she was she had no chance with Catseye, who won with a stone in hand. So finished 1888. Captain Horace Hayes was at the meeting, a guest of Jimmy's.

CHAPTER XXXV.

YEAR 1889.

Early in 1889 racing, as far as countrybreds were concerned, received a heavy blow by the resolve of General Parrott to close his breeding stud at Karnaul, but the fine old man had more than proved the ability of Northern India to produce clean bred horses with stamina, bone and size. In February poor old Mr. Abercrombie, who had for so many years been associated with Sonapore, died at Somastipore, aged sixty-nine. He had retired from the service and was

managing the Nurhun Estate for the Court of Wards, his head-quarters being at Pusa. Poor old Bicrom, his memory is still green with us. Another great loss to the meeting was *debonair* Charley Boileau, who had sold his share in Cheyton Pursa, and left to manage a business in Bombay, where he reigns now king of the Yacht Club; to him, honest "Bosun" Elliot, and cheery Bob Lockhart was mainly due the upkeep of the meeting from 1885. Poor Bill Stewart, whose cynical sayings had amused us for many Sonepores, died at Mirzapore during June. The racing opened favorably, the presence of Majors Wallenstein, Beaver and Prior, and Messrs. Scales, Gregson, Gregory and other plungers, made the lotteries go with a *verve* they had not experienced for years, and Harry was dead beat every night. Kangaroo squandered a big field for the Lilliputs, and Harlequin easily settled Melody and Mirabelle in the Karnaul Purse. A splendid field of ten declared for the Doomraon Cup, and Charley Webb's Midas, a dead outsider, romped home with Victor Hickley up. Midas' winning the Cup was a surprise to everyone, and should show men who can't afford to race, that it is quite possible with care and a well selected horse, to beat big stables. Here was a zillah nag, trained on a track round the factory zerats, and without the aid of a light weight, coming out and beating Spray, The Ghost, Albicore, Caulfield, Torchlight and Flying Fish, all carefully trained racers.

Mr. Charles Charlton won the Hutwa Cup. On the second day, Midas, this time with Rowland up, again beat all the cracks for the Bettiah Cup; then Harry Abbott's Exbank, beautifully ridden by Captain Carandini, won the Durbangah Cup; and his stable followed this up by pulling off the biggest plum at the meeting, the Merchants' Cup, with the dead outsider Little Sister, belonging to Major Prior, young Frank Shakespear steering her; Mr. Charles' Young Chorister, a hot favorite, was not even placed. However, there was balm in

Gilead for Lower Bengal, for Spray, ridden by Rowland, won the Beck Cup, although she had slipped up and fallen the same morning in the Bettiah Cup, for which she had been heavily backed. This ended an exceedingly good day's sport. On the last day, racing was equally exciting, a grand struggle between Charlton, Victor and Exbank resulted in a half length win for the first named, from Victor, with the other close up. Harlequin again beat the moderate lot of Countrybreds present, and then that cur The Ghost, ridden by Ikey Barton, upset a terribly big pot in the Jaintpore Purse. "What am I to do?" asked Ikey. "The minute they're off, crawl all over him if you can," said Harry, "and let the brute think he's running away with you," and he did it too; with reins loose, Ikey wobbled about like a blancmange on a dish. The Ghost had never had such an experience, in a blue funk he ran away from start to finish, and only when he got past the post, ten lengths ahead of the rest, did Ikey sit down and let the horse discover he was after all carrying a horseman. Gold, Baby Canning's pretty mare, won Jessop's Cup, and Ross-Palmer's Saleyard finished the meeting by winning the *Planters' Gazette Purse*. No big losers or winners, though Mr. Charles did not go away with empty pockets, still the purses were well divided, and everyone was satisfied. The Cups this year were beauties, the majority of them from Messrs. Walter Locke & Co.

Ay de mi alhama said the Moorish king when finally banished from the well loved portals of his magnificent palace, and with equal fervour, though in the English language, did the visitors to Sonapore give way to lamentations when the curtain was pulled down by the Stewards of 1889 after as successful a meeting as was ever held at the Goodwood of India. Socially it was enjoyable in the extreme, and racingly by no means a failure, in spite of the fixture clashing with Lucknow, and that only a few horses represented the large Chumparun stable generally so well to the front. The major-

ity of Jimmy's string were in Calcutta under Captain Horace Hayes' able care, waiting for the big things there, and only one or two were reserved for Sonepore, but the Jaintpore stable was in force, and many of the nags trained by Harry gave decent accounts of themselves. Then Bob Lockhart had a few useful ones, and that well-known sportsman, Mr. Charles, the pride of Lower Bengal, brought four good gees with the elder Robinson in charge, to show the way home to the boys of Behar. Charlton and Young Chorister were both hosts in themselves, and *facile princeps* in their respective classes, while Thrasher was as good as could be made for his height. Spray also, Mr. Charles's property, had been trained at Jaintpore, and only rejoined her owner the day of the meeting, looking fit and well. Captain Carandini, the neat and popular Adjutant of the Behar Light Horse, brought down, trained by himself, Gipsy, Mr. T. Barclay's well-known Australian mare, as well as that pretty chestnut pony of young Harry Moseley's, bearing the same name. Also an uncommonly handsome 13-3 Arab, one of the good old-fashioned sort, a fleabitten grey entire, with grand legs, loins, girth and substance; few such fine-shaped good-tempered ones are to be picked out nowadays. The sporting Dhurumtollah Vet., Dr. Lauter, sent up a very nice Arab pony, Peacock, which, though not quite smart enough to overthrow Kangaroo in the Lilliputs, was afterwards purchased by Mr. Charles. Mr. Rowland had only Harlequin, that best of Karnaul bred ones, his English horse, Padlock, being in hospital, but Harlequin proved good enough to pull off the most coveted prize of the meeting, the handsome Trades' Cup, which had been the cynosure of every eye since first displayed in the *shamiana* of Mr. Lockhart's camp. Absent, but not forgotten, was Charley Webb, the best man and bravest heart that ever breathed in Behar, but he sent us up a horse which, trained only on factory *zerats*, showed us the way home in style, and made all who knew the owner

regret he was not present to hear us cheer the popular victories of his honest nag. Although there were not so many big camps as usual, yet a goodly collection of small ones made the number of visitors pretty equal to last year. In the combined camps of Messrs. Hudson and Macleod were over thirty, Mrs. Hudson being hostess, while in Mr. Lockhart's camp, close on forty had to be catered for, but Mrs. Nicolay, who kindly took upon herself the trouble of arranging, was fully equal to the occasion, and right well she looked after the wants of the large camp. Next down the line was the tent of the hard-working clerk of the course, Mr. Robertson Pughe, thanks to whom the polo ground and race-course were in excellent order. The ball-room roof had to be dismantled just before the meeting, owing to several of the beams looking unsafe, but in spite of this Mr. Pughe had a temporary roof erected, and the floor was in its usual good state for dancing. Next to Mr. Pughe's tent, came Dr. Russell's of Chupra, then Mr. Ellis', followed by Lieutenant Pressey of Dinapore, who brought a bevy of fair maids from across the Ganges to enjoy the fun of the fair. Then came Mr. Gasper Gregory's of Durbangah, with stately Miss Seth, and his three other winsome and accomplished little nieces, one of them gifted with a voice like that of the angel Isafrel; and last, but not least in this line, rose the fine *shamiana* and tents of the Connaught Rangers. Opposite were Mr. Bourdillon's tents, with a party of thirty, and then followed a host of small encampments, Mr. Harris, Captain Carandini, Mr. Chardon of Chupra and others. Mr. Alf. Simson of Messrs. Kilburn & Co., as guest of Bob Lockhart, was a welcome addition to the meeting. The weather throughout was excellent, though a trifle warmer than usual at Sonépoore. Major Beaver and Veterinary-Surgeon Blenkinsop were up on duty from Calcutta, buying remounts; from the first thing in the morning till dark, save on the racing mornings, they were on their legs, examin-

ing and passing horses, and on several days not even returning to camp for breakfast. As usual the dealers for the first two or three days were impossible in their prices; but on the last two days 40 or 50 decent horses were secured by the Major for moderate figures. The majority of horses brought that year by the dealers were absurdly young, few being over two and a half years old, and many of them showed wretched so-called Norfolk trotter blood, with hideous heads, coarse necks, big barrels and poor legs, they were an excellent satire on the mismanagement of Government studs. Ponies sold as dear as horses, and anything with galloping points brought big figures. The dealers to a man acknowledged that horse-breeding would soon be a thing of the past in Northern India, for, as they sensibly said, it is cheaper for them to breed ponies than horses, as they eat less and fetch as good or better prices. Elephants were comparatively cheap, two very fine ones were secured for Julpai planters, by Mr. Simson. The Stewards were ably assisted by Major Beaver, and that the handicapping was good, was shown by the fact that only two horses out of all those treated cried noncontent. The finishes were, most of them, close, and the proverbial blanket would have covered the lot in many of them. Ryder, the only professional present after Robertson's accident on the second day, won most of the races he was successful in by sheer riding, and, although only two competed for the Durbahah Cup, the race from pillar to post was fought inch by inch between Mr. Rowland and Captain Carandini, the gallant Hussar only just getting home on the post. The only easily won event of the meeting was the Trades' Plate, Harlequin being much too good for the field. The biggest upset of the meeting was the Merchants' Cup, looked on as a moral for Mr. Charles' handsome Arab, Young Chorister, who was made a hot favorite at the lotteries, the rest starting almost unbacked, but in the morning the race resolved itself into a

splendid struggle between the Jaintpore pair, Khedari disputing every inch of the ground with Major Prior's speedy mare. For a wonder, Harry Abbott's account was on the right side. The band of the Connaught Rangers played every morning at the races, adding very much to the enjoyment of those present. The speeches of Saturday night's supper were of the usual amusing description, particularly that of Mr. Owen, in returning thanks for the ladies. On Friday afternoon the Connaught Rangers improvised a most amusing Gymkhana, Mr. Robertson acting as Secretary. It commenced with an ekka race, driven by ladies, which brought so many entries that it had to be run in two heats. Miss Buchanan won the first, and Miss Stone Wigg the second, the latter lady finally proving the conqueror. Mr. Fletcher then won a hack race, which was followed by the cream of the evening's fun, a side-saddle race for gentlemen in ladies' costume. The first to appear was the elegant Miss Thomasina Olpherts, mounted on Mr. Pughe's impetuous and fiery steed. The pretty horse-breaker was a bit uncertain in her saddle. She swayed about a good deal, and showed a good bit of foot, and more than once was saved by a vigorous grasp of the pommel. The boys most unkindly christened her "Carrotty Poll," which hurt her feelings considerably. Sweet Tottie Owen was the pick of the bunch for face and figure combined. She was beautifully got up by Mrs. Simson, and showed a sixteen inch waist and a beautiful patent collapsible; she sat in the saddle as if to the manner born, and the Bengali bookmaker promptly laid two to one on her. The other young ladies did not show so much care over their toilets, and were not in it with these two beauties; the race lay between them, Miss Tottie winning quite in Vinall's best style. The Connaught Rangers were the life of the meeting, and they not only expressed much admiration for Harry's judgment of champagne, but were deeply impressed by his Imperial capa-

city for sampling it. Who would have thought then, that only a short time hence, that bright boy Mostyn Owen, and poor old John Boxwell, would both fall victims, at Dacca, to that foul scourge cholera, or that clever little Harry Mosely, an assistant of Motipore, who wrote the following during the meeting, would also be cut off in the flower of his youth.

A LEGEND OF SONEPORE, 1889.

Our Master of the *I.P.G.*

By his Great Paper swore
That the Great Sonepore Meeting
Should last for evermore ;
By his Great Paper swore he,
And named a Meeting Day,
And sent Prospectus papers forth,
East and West and South and North,
To summon to the fray

East and West and South and North
The Post doth hie them fast,
Till near and far each Factory
Hath heard the news at last.
Shame on the bloated Manager
Who sits at home at ease
And says his poor Assistants
Shant camp beneath the trees !

And now hath every Factory
Sent up his tale of men,
The Managers are plentiful,
Assistants too I ken.
Before the Stand at Sonepore
Is met the great array,
A proud man was our Master
Upon that Meeting Day !

For all Chumparun's noblest
Were ranged beneath his ken,
And many a stout Tirhootian,
And most of Chupra's men ;
And many a dainty damsel
Came eager for the fray,
And bookies from Calcutta
Upon that Meeting Day.

And Missirs there by thousands
Came with their squealing tats,
And elephants by hundreds
And monkeys, dogs and cats ;
A mile around the market
The throng stopped up the ways,
A goodly sight it was to see
Through ten long nights and days.

The races filled up quickly,
The card was well got up,
And many there were present
Who'd given Stakes or Cup ;
And in the merry ball-room
Were " Kala-juggahs " piled
By hands of cunning mashers
For flirting soft and mild.

And now the meet is over
But Master's work's not done,
For oh ! that horrid settling
Is only just begun.
The loser in his anguish
Begins to groan and mutter,
But Master blandly says, " Dear boy,
I'll post you in Calcutta."

Never was Sonepore Meeting
Run with such great success,
The praises of all present
Were echoed by the press.
Thank to our little Master,
We always now are sure
That we shall have a meeting
Each year in gay Sonepore.

Assistants were not as strongly represented in the racing line as was hoped, but Messrs. Hickley, Canning, Palmer, Rutherford and Barton did their best, the latter's win on Ghost, property of that grand old veteran caterer, Mr. Monk, of Calcutta and Kurseong, was most amusing. Ghost had been hot weathering at Lall Serryah, but on account of Jimmy's uncertainty as to whether he would be able to come to Sonepore, was, at the last moment, transferred to the Jaint-

pore stable. The shifty chestnut ran badly the first day, but he gave us a taste of the way he could travel when he liked, and simply squandered his field in the 'Jaintpore' Plate. There was standing of drinks galore that night at the excellent Esplanade Hotel, when the wire of the win was received there, and on arrival at Calcutta after his triumph, Ghost was treated to a whole magnum of Monk's own peculiar and particularly fine liqueur whisky, ten years in bottle. Mr. Carr-Stephen brought all the way from Mymensingh a couple of ponies, and all Behar men regretted his pluck was not better rewarded.

A very memorable fight, without gloves, came off at the lotteries one night, between Tim the Chupra Toff, and Baby the Bruiser of Chumparun. One round was enough to satisfy honor and then both were put to bed. The comical element that year was supplied by that mealely-mouthed soldier, Captain Willie Scales, who brought up Kangaroo. He came up quite promiscuously, hired a small dirty red and blue striped tent, stuck it up in a most conspicuous place, and kept us alive with his vagaries. Colonel Simpson had sent his two English ponies, Mike and Marquise, to Jaintpore to train, and they kept up the reputation of Tirhoot as a summering place, winning heaps of big races up-country, little Mike pulling off the Civil Service Cup. Jimmy's horses in Calcutta did not do as well as we all hoped, in fact from start to finish Knightsbridge proved a most disappointing and expensive purchase. During 1889 Mr. Minden Mackenzie, Manager of Dooriah, always a welcome addition to Sonepore gatherings, wooed and won the belle of Behar, pretty Miss Alice Williams, daughter of that straightest of sportsmen, Mr. E. Gwatkin Williams.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

YEAR 1890.

On the 28th April 1890 a meeting of Sonepore patrons was held at Mr. Bourdillon's house in Chupra, when all the

old Stewards were re-elected, and several valuable additions made, notably, Messrs. C. C. Stevens, W. Kemble, Sir George Larpent, A. C. Brett and others. Harry Abbott suggested that as the Railway brought in so many stray visitors, who came for a day, saw all the races, and left without subscribing a penny, it would be a good thing to rail in a paddock and charge these gentry gate money; this was passed unanimously. The programme, a very liberal one, with nine thousand rupees of added money, was passed and published during the month, and another record meeting was looked forward to. Judge Brett of Mozufferpore took in hand the working up of subscriptions for the Civilians' Cup, and right well he did it, collecting over Rs. 1,600. A staunch supporter of the meeting, Mr. Hamilton Gordon, Judge of Chupra, had been temporarily promoted to the Calcutta High Court, but returned in November, and was present with his popular wife. Joint subscription camps were now becoming the order of the day, and were just as jolly, though much of the old hospitable family party business was broken up, owing chiefly to many of the old Civilians and planters having retired, and their successors not being able to afford to play host to twenty or more guests. Year by year more and more comparative strangers now began to collect, and in a great measure the old order of things had changed; but this was bound to be inevitable, and the Stewards were sensible in making the best of things and cutting their coat to suit their cloth; had they not done so the meeting must have collapsed altogether, which would have been most lamentable. Early in the year Chupra lost that popular medico, Dr. Russell, who was transferred, and his place was taken by Dr. Tom Macdonald, a brother of the Highland chieftains Harry, John and George. A gloom had been cast over the district in February by the news of the sad accident at home, which resulted in the untimely death of poor Pierce Llewhellin

of Rajaputti. The Jaintpore stable, in spite of the loss of the Apcar-Gasper string, was as strong as ever, for in addition to Colonel Simpson's champion ponies, Mike and Marquise, the powerful Jodhpore stable, now under the charge of Captain Lee-Warner, summered there; as well as Mr. E. H. Gregory's, Mr. Dolby's and Mr. Charles' little lots. Jimmy had some rattling good ponies, and Lall Serryah bred foals ready to run this year, Tete-à-Tete, one of General Parrott's, Queenie, Finesse, Talkative (sold to Charley Webb), Jessie, Sylvester, Fleur de Lys, and the walers Knightsbridge and Cavendish were his lot. First entries in July were excellent, the Chupra and Tirhoot *jeunesse dorée* having evidently made up their minds to back up the meeting royally. In August we got the sad news of the death at home, from internal cancer, of poor M. P. Gasper, than whom a straighter sportsman never lived; he was a great loss to the Indian Turf, as well as to the Calcutta bar. During the same month Harry Abbott lost his brother Edgar, a particularly fine horseman, who was the crack G.R. of China and Japan, he died from aneurism of the heart, brought on by trying to keep his weight down to the eight stone scale. The camps indented for at Sonepore were fully up to the average, Messrs. Stevens, Bourdillon, Lockhart, Barclay, McNaghten and Abbott had the biggest ones, and the new Dinapore Regiment, The Kings, was well to the fore. Colonel Joey Dene, Mr. Lawrie Johnstone, Mr. Jock McInnis, Captain Lee-Warner, Mr. Boteler and Major Beaver were among the guests. Very imposing, as visitors drove in from the station, looked the new enclosure, and as over four hundred rupees of gate money was taken from non-subscribers, the fifteen hundred rupees spent on it was certainly well laid out.

That Sonepore was regaining some of its ancient greatness was undoubtedly the opinion of all who assembled to attend the races. Both in the number of people present, the

number and class of the horses, the condition of the grand stand, of the ball and supper-rooms, which had been greatly improved by the erection of the large enclosure, there was an immense improvement over previous years. Considering the obstruction caused to the preparation of the course, and the various other works taken in hand this season, by the terribly late and heavy rains during October, everything was in most excellent order, and the man would indeed have been fastidious to complain of the programme of amusements. All the regular camps which yearly formed for Sonapore, and many new ones, holding in some cases a large number of visitors, had early in the week taken up their sites. The Calcutta visitors were more numerous than in any previous year. The 8th Kings, who replaced the Connaught Rangers at Dinapore, brought over a camp and regimental band, and in addition to these, an unusual number of small camps had been started. Most of the district officials and heads of camps had been on the ground for a week before, seeing to all the necessary arrangements, but the afternoon train on Friday brought in the bulk of the visitors. The lotteries on the first night filled at such a rate, that the Secretary had his fingers quite cramped taking down the tickets. Bravo was made favorite for the Lilliputs, although many of the public fancied the Calcutta representative, Sprite, who was to be steered by that fine rider, Jimmy Robinson. The Behar Stakes had four starters out of the five entered, and Finesse and Talkative divided favoritism on account of their being older than Harry Abbott's pair. Lord Harry was, of course, considered a moral for the Hutwa Cup, and in spite of Exbank's dicky leg, he was thought good enough to be made second favorite; while Knightsbridge and Referee both carried their owners' coin. Munwyrina and Padlock were about equally sought for by backers in the Bettiah Cup, while Vedette on his Motiharee running was supposed to be out of it. Midas had most support for Messrs. Thomas and Moran's.

Cup, and The Brat for Messrs. Jessop's. Half past seven saw everyone assembled in the new enclosure, and the keeping out of the paddock of the crowds of dirty Aryans, who in other years were veritable nuisances and prevented ladies from coming down to look at the parade of horses, was thoroughly appreciated. Mr. Apperley, on Bravo, opened the ball for the Lall Serryah stable by beating Sprite in spite of Robinson's determined riding, and then all went to inspect the four Behar countrybreds. Colonel Dene, Director of the Army Remount Department, was especially interested in these, and expressed his admiration of them in no measured terms; they certainly were a very handsome lot. Talkative, a daughter of that once famous Behar Stakes mare, Talkaway, was a bright bay five-year-old filly, very like her mother, and with plenty of power and bone. Finesse, 3 years, by Lincoln out of poor Charley Mangles' Finette, for such a young one shaped well. Both these were bred in Chumparun by Jimmy McLeod. Stately, the best looking of the Jaintpore pair, by Statesman out of Czarina, was a very blood-looking colt, though wanting time, being only a few months over two; he was a bright bay with black points, a lovely head and rein, standing 15 hands and with perfect manners and mouth. How Nice was a pretty little 14-2 filly by Caractacus out of a stud-bred mare, and though not a race horse, looked like making a rattling good hack and pigsticker. Messrs. McLeod and Abbott certainly proved that fine good boned horses can be bred in Behar, and it seems a pity the industry has not been more developed in the district. Lord Harry, who, as usual, came out in blinkers, looked in the picture of health and condition, as did his stable-companion, Exbank; Knightsbridge had never been brought to the post in India in such brilliant fettle as when his owner stripped him that Saturday morning for the Hutwa Cup, and the Chumparun boys all fancied their representative's chance. Referee also did his owner great

credit ; he looked big and well, and his old lameness seemed to have quite gone. Marque was, like all the horses under G. Robinson's charge, as fit as hands could make him, and though everyone knew that if Lord Harry chose to go, there was nothing else in the race, yet the knowledge of his temper made the other owners hope they might have some small chance. Lord Harry played the garden ass going down to the post, but Mr. Nicolay, after two attempts, let the field go very level. How that English horse did streak out ; before a furlong was accomplished, he had simply carried the rest off their legs, and into the straight he led five lengths in advance, but at the distance post he stuck his toes in, enabling Underwood on Knightsbridge to creep up, but Pugh hustled the Jodhpore horse along and got home an easy winner. The Jaintpore stable's luck continued, and Vedette romped in a winner in front of Padlock, but Jimmy, under the terms of the race, claimed him for Rowland Hudson. Messrs. Jessop's Cup brought out a fine field of ponies, and a very pretty race resulted between Jessie and Tom Tit, the former keeping well up to last year's form, proved the best. So ended a very good day's sport, and every one went home pleased. The Durbangah Band, kindly lent by the Maharajah, played in the enclosure ; polo and lawn tennis whiled away the afternoon, and were followed by a dance in the evening, capitally managed by Mr. Bourdillon, and at second supper Jock McInnis' beautiful voice aided much to the enjoyment of those present.

The second night's lotteries were well attended, and it was all the Secretary could do to take down tickets ; thirteen five hundred rupee forms filled up during the course of the evening, a couple of young Civilians being fortunate enough to draw Colonel Simpson's stable, which sold for Rs. 480 in the Merchants' Cup lottery. Proceedings opened on Tuesday morning with the Golightly Stakes, presented by that

enterprising firm of seed merchants, Messrs. Begg, Sutherland & Co. of Cawnpore, and for this Kangaroo and Jessie divided favoritism, but the Arab succeeded in getting home an easy winner in front of Jessie, with Tom Tit third. Then Jimmy's Tete-à-tete appropriated kind-hearted General Parott's *Farewell Kurnaul Purse*, beating Victory and Hubshi easily; for the first half mile the jockeys on the big pair cantered leisurely along and allowed little Hubshi to get a tremendous lead, but the rogue put his ears back turning the home corner and let them catch him hand over hand. Roy Ganga Pershad, the wealthy Durbangah Banker and Zemindar, gave a very handsome pair of silver side dishes to be run for; they were chosen by his Manager, Mr. Gasper Gregory, from Messrs. Elkington & Co.'s stock. Six horses started to do battle for it, the favorite, Blaze, belonging to Joe Anderson, winning after a good race from Gipsy; the latter's owner, Jack Barclay, claimed the winner and secured a cheap nag. The Durbangah Cup was a closely contested struggle, Knightsbridge at last earning a winning bracket for his popular and sporting owner. Exbank had been badly treated by the handicappers on his first day's running; and, though they weighted the others fairly, they treated Exbank alone as if it had been an untruly run race. He, however, again occupied the proud position of last, conclusively proving his first day's form correct. For the Merchants' Cup of Rs. 1,000, given by Messrs. Gisborne, Kilburn, Begg Dunlop and Gillanders Arbuthnot, nothing would go down with the public but Mike, and it was thought that the Jaintpore trained pair would run first and second, but Young Chorister showed up most unexpectedly and, having seemingly returned to his old form, split the pair opposite the stand and for a moment looked like winning, but the game little brown came like a lion when Pugh shook him up, and eventually romped home a couple of lengths in front; Marquise a close third. On Tuesday afternoon Captain Scales

improvised a very amusing gymkhana for polo ponies, buggy horses and hacks, which whiled away the time pleasantly. That wonderful old overgreen, Harry Abbott's Jerusalem, some eighteen years of age, simply left his opponents standing still in the buggy stakes and looked as sleek as a four-year-old. Again good lotteries on the third night and good racing on Saturday; most of the horses dealt with accepted the handicapper's allotments, which were fairly and carefully adjusted, though Exbank's owner had again some reason for dissatisfaction, being given top-weight, though he had occupied the last position in the two previous races he had competed for. The ball opened with the Doomraon Cup, which that good pony Kangaroo had little difficulty in appropriating; Tete-à-tete walked over for the *Gazette* Cup, and then followed the plum of the meeting, the Civilians' Cup, subscriptions for which had poured in so generously, that the sum total amounted to Rs. 1,500. Five of the best horses at the meeting went out for it, and most of the owners were sanguine of success, but the English filly, Gala, who had improved wonderfully in the Jaintpore climate, proved good enough to win easily; Exbank last again. Messrs. Moran and Thomas, in spite of adverse times, did not withhold their customary purses, and that good old horse, Munwyrina, the property of a popular Chupra planter, upset the calculations even of his trainer, and romped home a winner in front of Blaze. Everyone regretted their old friend the Maharajah of Cooch Behar was not present to see his Cup run for, but he was ably represented by his genial Secretary, Dick Bignell. Marquise was a hot favorite, but owing to Jimmy Robinson getting a flying start on Trojan, the latter got home in front of the game little mare. Then Ena won the Assistants' Scurry, and Messrs. Elkington's pretty little tea set went to Mr. Jack Wilson, whose handsome bay mare, Sweetbriar, well ridden by Pugh, came in a winner. The Trades' Cup from Messrs. Elkington's was much admired,

and was placed in the centre of the supper room. After Thursday's supper the usual speechifying took place, Mr. Stevens eulogising the Secretary to such an extent, that the modest little man absolutely blushed, and when some enthusiasts had carried him thrice round the room and set him down safely, he returned thanks in a truly becoming manner.

For twenty years there had not been a more all round successful meeting; the racing had been exceptionally good, and the prizes well divided, no unpleasantnesses to mar the harmony, all the arrangements capital, and from commencement to end the large number of people present combined to make everything pass off pleasantly. Mr. Stevens was, perhaps, a little too flattering to the Secretary in his speech after Thursday night's supper, for as Harry Abbott explained, he could have done nothing had he not been so liberally backed up and assisted by his brother Stewards and the visitors who flocked in from Chupra, Bankipore, Calcutta, Durbangah, Dinapore, Mozufferpore and Motihari, while the goodness of the racing should honestly be attributed to the generosity of the maharajahs, civilians, merchants, trades, and other donors of the handsome purses and cups, which naturally enough attracted owners. Messrs. Framji catered excellently and gave universal satisfaction. The subscriptions were liberal in the extreme, and everyone left the camp happy and satisfied. Horses were poor, in fact, year by year country-breds have deteriorated, showing but little blood or bone, and the heavy headed weeds one saw under every tree were themselves condemnatory of Mr. Hallen's system, though with Colonels Queripel and Joey Dene, and common sense to the rescue, our Indian studs may yet be regenerated. Bullocks were dear, owing to Government agents purchasing all that passed muster. Majors Beaver and Webb picked up some C.B.'s for Native Cavalry purposes fairly cheap, and several very fine ponies were bought by Jimmy and other purchasers.

The 'Calcutta visitors punted freely, but did not take away much 'oof, the principal winners being Captains Scales and Lee-Warner. Mr. Fenton was the happy possessor of the handsome Trades' Cup. Mrs. Bourdillon took great pains to have the ball-room prettily decorated each night, and, thanks to Messrs. Ellis, Longmuir and Geordie Graham, the course and polo grounds were in excellent order. Cricket, polo, gym-khanas and tennis all buzzed freely, while the evening reunions at the various camps and capital singing, made the meeting pass most enjoyably.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

YEAR 1891.

Early in 1891 it seemed as if the Stewards would have to look about for a new Secretary as Harry Abbott had left Jaintpore and gone to Calcutta to look after the interests of his paper, resigning ere doing so the Secretaryships of both Sonepore and Mozufferpore. Two of the Stewards also retired to England—Mr. George Llewellyn of Durbangah and Mr. E. A. Mackintosh of Chupra. The latter had sold his good little factory, Rampore, to Glass Vincent, a son of Mr. Frank Vincent, who had done Sonepore such yeoman service in its earlier years. Like household words had been the names of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Mangles as staunch patrons of Sonepore for many long days, and sad indeed were all Beharites to hear from England that death had claimed their dear old friend. The *I.P.G.* wrote thusly:—

“With very deep grief we heard by last mail of the sad death of one whose cheery voice and good-natured face was well known in Behar. Albert Champion Mangles was a man whom to know was to like thoroughly; generous to a fault, hospitable to excess, and kind-hearted to a degree, he was one of the most popular Civilians who ever joined the Indian Service. The old Haileybury lot were mostly good fellows but the

school never turned out a better specimen than 'Noisy' Mangles. After several years spent in Bengal, he drifted on to Behar, and it is there he was best known and beloved. Married to a Miss Elliot, whose kith and kin numbered largely in the district, he was the life of every meeting of bye-gone days; and his camp was always filled with youngsters, who were taught that in seeing them enjoying themselves, their host was best repaid. Sonepore was *par excellence* the meet he loved best, and his last one was the only sad one he ever passed, for he, and all of us, knew that we could scarcely ever hope to see him again, camped under the dear old grove of trees. Still we hoped that he would be able to pass years of happiness in the auld countrie and not be cut down in his prime. Often of late years, in the time-honoured after supper speeches at Sonepore, has affectionate reference been made to Mr. and Mrs. Albert Mangles, and many a warm 'Hear, hear' resounded from the throats of their many friends. As an officer of H.M.'s Bengal Civil Service, he gained the golden opinion of all classes he was brought into contact with, and he never made an enemy, because it takes two to quarrel. As Opium Agent at Patna, he was a loyal friend and kind master to all under him, and never once did he or his subordinates let indigo and opium interests clash. It is men like Albert Mangles, who, by their straightforward dealing, tact and honourable conduct, have brought the Civil Service into deserved repute. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word, who carried no side, and who said evil of no one. Our sincerest sympathies are with his bereaved wife, and she may rest assured that poor Albert's death is as sorrowfully mourned by all his old friends out here, as it is by his own people at home. He had been suffering for years with a painful affection in the throat, which proved to be cancer, and which gradually got so bad that towards the end he could scarcely swallow, and only speak with difficulty. An operation was performed

by one of the most skilful English surgeons, but he obtained but little relief, and only lived three days after it, and on the 15th April he breathed his last. *Vale dear old Albert.*"

And in July the awful news came of poor Gwatkin Williams' sudden death. Of him in the *I.P.G.* appeared the following :—

"Once more the sad task has fallen to our Editor of having to chronicle in these columns the death of an old and very dear friend. On Wednesday morning a telegram in the daily *Englishman* bore to his many friends in Calcutta the awful news of poor Mr. Gwatkin Williams' sudden and totally unexpected death, while playing lawn tennis in Durbangah. To say that a gloom has been cast over Behar and Bengal society gives not the faintest conception of the terrible shock with which the tidings were received—for there were very few in this presidency to whom the late gentleman was not a *persona grata*. To know Gwatkin was not only to like and respect, but to love him heartily, for his was truly a most noble character ; of an extremely sweet and gentle nature, gifted with courteous manners and an exceedingly handsome presence, he endeared himself to all he ever met, Indians as well as Europeans, and there will be no more sincere mourners for him than the native servants and tenants of his old Chupra property, the Buhrow-lee indigo concern. Before going any further, we wish to mention a most curious circumstance which occurred in connection with the portrait which appears on the opposite page, and which was intended for our last issue. For the first time since we have been publishing these pictures the collotype company reported to us that they could not successfully print off copies of the photograph we had sent them for that week's issue, as, though they had made several different plates, and the first copy from each came out fairly well, yet the second was much fainter, and the next almost indistinct ; not wishing to disappoint constituents we urged the manager to do his

best, but though he tried over and over again the results were still the same, and we were reluctantly forced to insert the following explanation.

"We are sorry to have to disappoint our constituents of our usual fortnightly Portrait Gallery picture, but we have received information from the Calcutta Phototype Company that until the weather cools considerably they cannot work the collotype process on account of its being mainly dependent upon a solution of gelatine for the production of the pictures, and this is so greatly affected by the present intense heat as to be incapable of resisting the pressure required. Consequently we must ask the indulgence of our subscribers for a short while, assuring them that we shall do our best to issue the next portrait as soon as the weather permits.'

"The picture was that of Mr. Gwatkin Williams, and the very morning the intelligence of his death reached us, the Company delivered the pictures at our office—truly a strange coincidence.

"Mr. E. Gwatkin Williams was born at that large Welsh fishing village Llangwin, which is on the river Chuddy in Pembrokeshire, and of which village his father was, for over fifty years, the highly respected Vicar. Up to the age of fourteen Gwatkin was educated entirely by his father, who was very highly cultured, and during this period he got an unusual share of hunting, fishing, boating and shooting; few lads have ever passed a more enjoyable boyhood, or had more perfect training as far as all sports went, and he was passionately fond of field athletics and yachting, so he could not possibly have been born in a country more suited to his tastes. Dr. Earle of Chigwell in Essex finished his education, and finding that circumstances, would not allow him to follow his elder brother into the army, he came out to India in 1863, and choosing indigo as a future, started as an Assistant to Mr. J. F. Curtis of Ramkola in the Chupra district. In a few years he was put in charge of the

concern, and within four years of landing, purchased Buhrowlee, which was his home and livelihood for twenty-three years of his life, from 1867 to 1890. During his Chupra career he brought many good horses to the post, including that wonderful country-bred Armadale, and the ponies Robin and Gold Mohur. That game and good Australian horse B Sharp was one of his, and he bought him at auction for Rs. 6,300, a price never before realised at any Indian public sale; with him he won several big prizes, notably the Calcutta Merchants' Cup. Then followed the purchase of Gonzago, Nulquine, that ever-green old horse Red Deer and many others of less note—till finding racing too expensive as his family grew up, he sold his stable, as it stood, to that sporting Dacca nobleman, Nawab Kajeh Ahsunoola, who, however, made it a *sine quâ non* that Mr. Williams should train and manage all racing matters for him. Indigo about this time began to have a bad succession of seasons, and so in 1885, Mr. Williams accepted from his friend the Maharajah of Durbangah, the management of the Purneah Estates, but still looked after the Nawab's racing interests, employing the services of that steady trainer Perrett, who had been with him for several years at Buhrowlee. In 1888 finding his work would not permit him to leave Purneah much, he asked the Nawab to allow Mr. C. H. Moore to look after the horses; when the Nawab got tired of racing he generously made Messrs. Moore and Williams a present of his entire string. For a short time these gentlemen raced in partnership with fair success, under the name of Mr. Cressmore, and then Mr. Williams retired from the turf, deservedly honored by all his compeers, for a truer or straighter sportsman never existed. A born judge of a horse, he seldom made mistakes in selecting, and as a trainer he was fully the equal of the best professionals, as a horseman he was one of the finest cross-country riders to be met anywhere, with perfect hands and temper, he could make his horse do whatever he

wanted, and had he been a lighter weight he would have proved himself a leading light among amateur race riders. He visited the old country several times, and the Welsh squires found the old Indian very bad to beat over the banks and streamlets of their fine hunting grounds. He was one of the oldest members of the Behar Light Horse, having served for over twenty-two years, and he only gave up command of the Chupra troop when going to Purneah.

"In 1888 Lord Dufferin procured Mr. Williams' services from H.H. the Maharajah, and entrusted him with the care and organisation of a monster shikar party, lasting for six weeks, at which were present the Duke and Prince Henry of Orleans, the Duke of Montrose, the Marquis and Marquise de Mores and many other notabilities, the party, thanks to his perfect management, succeeded in bagging twenty-one magnificent tigers, and in gratitude therefor when Mr. Williams went to England the next year, he was personally presented by the Comte de Paris and Duc de Chartres, with a very handsome piece of plate. On the retirement from the management of the Durbangah Raj of Mr. George Llewhellin in April last, His Highness sent for Mr. Williams and installed him at head-quarters as his Private Secretary, and in all probability would very shortly have entrusted him with the entire management of his vast estates, a position for which no one in the country would have been better suited. But alas the truth of the old adage of '*L'homme propose mais Dieu dispose*' was never more fatally proved, and ere this could come about, poor Gwatkin was struck down in the very prime of his life and manhood, the cause being heart disease. None of his friends ever suspected his heart was wrong, though his liver had, for many years, been seriously affected; he had been operated upon for abscess on the liver, but thanks to his magnificent constitution and abstemious life, he pulled through, and save one or two attacks he enjoyed fairly good health. The

following are the actual facts of the sad disaster. A station tennis tournament had been got up and Mr. Williams and Miss Briscoe were playing off the final ties with Mr. Cox and Miss Gregory ; after each side had won a set Mr. Williams suggested stopping, as it was getting almost too dark to see ; but it was agreed to go on, and they were three games all when Gwatkin began serving, and on crossing to the left court he suddenly threw up his hands, and fell backwards, just as if shot. Mr. Nicolay, who was umpiring, ran up and raised his head, but to all appearance he was dead. In the absence of any European Doctor, the native Civil Surgeon was called in, but could, of course, do nothing. We have little doubt but that H.H. the Maharajah, who proved himself such a generous patron to Colonel Money and Mr. Llewellyn, will not forget Mr. Williams' family in their affliction.

" Mr. Williams was twice married ; by his first wife he leaves two children ; his eldest son is in Messrs. Thomas & Co.'s employ at the Gondawarra indigo concern in Purneah, and his daughter was married last year to Mr. Minden Mackenzie, Manager of the Dooriah indigo concern in Tirhoot ; by the second marriage there are four young children, and our sincerest sympathies are with his widow and bereaved family, whose only consolation in their grief must be that his death was comparatively painless ; truly it may be said of him that—

Throughout a life of virtue he remained unto the end ;
Perfect husband, father, brother, perfect son and perfect friend.

" A good man and true has been lost to us, but the remembrance of Gwatkin Williams will long remain green in the memories of his sorrowing friends."

Two other gentlemen who had often visited Sonapore died during the year, poor old John Boxwell and young Mostyn Owen ; both fell victims at Dacca to that foul scourge cholera. At a meeting held at Mr. Kemble's house at

Bankipore in July, the Stewards resolved to write to Harry Abbott, asking him to still continue to act as Secretary, and as in addition to the round robin, all and each wrote privately, begging him not to desert the meeting, and as Bob Lockhart promised to see to the course, he consented, and a programme, almost similar to that of the former year, was shortly passed and published. Applications for camping ground poured in, the Lieutenant-Governor among the applicants, and a goodly gathering was assured.

Arthur Rogers, then District Engineer of the B. and N. W. Railway, had laid down a new floor to, and generally renovated, the ball room. This was Mr. C. C. Stevens' last year as Commissioner of Patna, and sorry was everyone to lose him; but an equally good fellow was to succeed him, David Lyall, whose prowess as a slayer of the unclean beast, in the Dacca jungles, was great in the land. The camps consisted of Sir Charles Elliott's, Mr. Stevens', Mr. Kemble's, Mr. Bourdillon's, Mr. Lockhart's, Mr. Brett's, Mr. Graham's, His Highness the Maharajah of Kuch Behar's, and several others, while the local Maharajahs of Hutwa, Durbangah, Doomraon, Bettiah and Gidour, all had camps, but were only entertaining their own native friends. Sonapore had not witnessed so much magnificence, pomp and display of native equipages and barbaric pearl and gold since Lord Mayo's year. The elephant fair was crowded. The outside racing men were represented by Mr. Ernest Gregory, Barty Bates, Captain Gunn, the Ezra brothers, and Ernest Cowie from Calcutta, Frank Shakespear from Fyzabad, Captain Webb from the North-West. The jockeys present were Robinson, Trahan, Pugh, Griffiths, Ramshaw and Hardy. Mr. Gregory had brought up Miladi and Lady St. Clair. Mr. Ezra, old Exbank, Cruet and Busree. Charley Webb had Midas, Referee and Fairy. Jimmy had Knightsbridge, Black Donald, Gravity, Zuleika, Sylvester and a pretty chestnut Australian pony

called after the old champion Fleur-de-Lys. Mr. Bob sent up Achievement from Midnapore and Mr. Dolby Sheik Esau. Ernest Cowie had Goldshares. Ross Palmer, good little Bravo and Beaufort. Jack Lowis, the spavined screw Munwyrtna, and there were a few more local horses and ponies, but a great falling off was visible from the days when Harry, Jimmy and poor Gwatkin, all had big strings. Goldshares opened the ball by winning the Lilliputs; Blaze won the Hutwa Cup from Miladi, Knightsbridge, Exbank and Soudan; old Refree sailed home for the Bettiah Cup; Fleur-de-Lys, steered by Rowland, scored her maiden win in Jessop's Cup, Midas brought Charley Webb's, or rather Tim Lockhart's colors home in the Brokers' Cup, and Achievement cantered home for the Behar Stakes. On the second day Bravo won the Golightly Stakes, Captain Webb up, and Blaze put down the favorite Miladi for the big prize of the meeting, the Durbangah Cup. Refree scored another triumph for Charley Webb, winning Gunga Pershad's Cup; Jimmy's Fleur-de-Lys won the big Pony Cup of a thousand rupees, presented by the Calcutta Agency houses, and Dragon won the Beck Cup. On the last day Sheik Esau beat Bravo in the Doomraon Cup, conceding the country-bred two stone, and Miladi lowered the colors of Blaze in the Civilians' Cup; Refree secured the Trades' Plate, and The Cooch Behar Cup fell to Achievement. Munwyrtna carried off Messrs. Elkington's Cup for Jack Lowis; and this ended a rather poor race meeting. But if the racing was poor, the social part of the fun was successful in the extreme. Those who know Lady Elliott can imagine how gracious and charming she was to one and all, and it was with intense indignation a rumour was heard in the middle of the meeting, that the Chupra budmashes had broken into Sir Charles' tent during the night, and lifted some three thousand rupees and some jewellery belonging to the Steward's wife; the thieves got off for the time. Geordie Graham was D.S.P. of Chupra and in

charge of the camp, his hair did not turn grey, but he became prematurely bald. Sir Charles danced like a boy at the balls, and on the first night came a real good cropper, Harry Abbott went to help him up, and consoled him thusly: "Well done, Sir, you fall as you do everything else, most thoroughly." Sir Charles and Lady Elliott were lavish in their hospitality throughout the meeting, and gave a splendid ball as well.

It is surprising that with all the fun going on and the demand on his time, His Honour found an opportunity not only to go through a great deal of work while at Sonepore, but to visit the Hajepore Sub-Division of the Mozufferpore District on the 16th instant. He was trollied across to the Hajepore end of the Gunduck Bridge, where he got down and rode through Hajepore and inspected minutely the Sub-Divisional Office, the Jail, the Moonsiff's Office and the Opium Office, and then walked over the Gunduck Bridge and rode from the Sonepore end (where his horse was waiting his return) to his camp. While at Sonepore he was frequently out riding and driving, and the rush of the crowd to see His Honour was a thing to be remembered, especially by those who happened to get mixed up in the thick.

At the last ball on the night of the 17th instant, there were some excellent speeches made at the supper. "Jimmy" McLeod proposed the health of His Honour in a feeling speech. He welcomed His Honour to Sonepore, wished him a prosperous reign, and hoped that he would repeat his visit. Sir Charles, in replying, thanked the members of the meet and the Committee for the hearty welcome they had extended to Lady Elliott and himself, and impressed on the planters the great influence they were capable of exercising for good or for evil, and hoped they would remember their position and exert their influence for the former only. He alluded to the Volunteer movement and to the stirring times of the Mutiny; and pointed out how

necessary it was for all to join as Volunteers, for though everyone may not think such a step immediately necessary, yet if a time came they would find what a small band of trained Englishmen could do even against tremendous odds. He could speak, he said, from his own experience what great advantage discipline and training can effect. Mr. Stevens, in proposing the health of the Secretary, said that they were all under the apprehension, when Mr. Abbott resigned last year, that the Sonepore Meet would collapse, for who could manage so well as he; the proof was the present meet, his excellent management was seen everywhere. So when Mr. Kemble, the Opium Agent, wrote in his usual persuasive style and asked him to resume the Secretaryship, everyone was happy that he had accepted this onerous post. Harry in returning thanks said that a great deal of the success of the meet depended on the cordial help he had received from several, especially from the Commissioner, the Opium Agent, Jimmy, Bob Lockhart and several of the planters. At 10 A.M. on the 18th instant, Sir Charles, Lady Elliott and party left Sonepore for Mozufferpore by train, being escorted to the railway station by a troop of the Behar Light Horse. And thus ended one of the most magnificent meets that Sonepore has witnessed.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

YEAR 1892.

In July 1892, at a meeting of Stewards, held in Calcutta, Harry Abbott asked to be relieved of his duties and suggested Mr. Bob Lockhart as his successor, but that festive sportsman declined, and so did several other localites, so Harry had to carry on the Secretaryship, and, publishing a programme early in August, drew excellent entries. The Stewards for the year in addition to the Maharajahs, were Messrs. Bourdillon, Graham, Forbes, Kemble, Hopkins, Lockhart, Elliot, Gordon, Gladstone

Hudson, Earle, Colonel Ilderton and Captain Edwards. Jimmy McLeod, for the first time for many years, was an absentee, having gone to Bonnie Scotland, leaving Donald Reed to run Lall Serryah for him. Camps were fewer than usual, owing to the depreciated rupee and a poor indigo season. The Lockharts' usual big gathering was *non est*, as they joined Mr. Earle's Camp; but Arthur Forbes, now Commissioner of Patna, came to the rescue, and so did Mr. Earle, who was acting during Mr. Bourdillon's absence as Collector of Chupra, and both had huge camps. A big contingent of the Queen's Regiment turned up from Dinapore. Messrs. Graham and Hay Webb had camps, and Rowland Hudson occupied Jimmy's old site in the corner. Jimmy was not only missed by the Europeans, but many were the expressions of regret among the local horse dealers, for he was always a big buyer and ever ready to arbitrate between buyer and seller. No Sonepore dealer ever disputed Jimmy's dictum as to price. Among the visitors were Captain Webb, (this to be his last Sonepore), Captain Eden Vansittart, Frank Shakespear, Captain Gunn, Mr. Fergusson from Behrampore, who had brought up old Yule Tide to carry his colors, and old Mr. Pell, the Calcutta boarding housekeeper, who had Velocity and Gerrard to ride him. Mr. Earle had put a board outside his camp, thoughtlessly dubbing it "Earleswood," of course he came in for considerable chaff, and the other campers called it the "Poggie Khana." Mr. Savi had come from Dacca with a batch of Government elephants for sale and managed to dispose of most of them. Harry Abbott brought up Exbank, whom he had trained solely by swimming, and Jimmy Robinson had come to steer the old bay. Miladi had also been sent up by Mr. Gregory, the rest were all local horses. In spite of a small camp, the lotteries were well patronised throughout. The first day's racing proved a series of upsets. For the Doomraon Cup Kingsland was made a hot favorite, selling for Rs. 400 in a five hundred lottery, but

Ross Palmer on Mameluke beat him comfortably. Then Exbank waltzed home for the Hutwa Cup in front of the favorites, Miladi and Blaze, Harry having got three quarters of him in three lotteries, the selling prices being Rs. 5, Rs. 10 and Rs. 15. Yulc Tide put down the heavily backed Camaltha in the Bettiah Cup. The Deer was beaten by Bravo in Jessop's Cup, Ross Palmer as astonished at getting home as Rowland was at being beaten. At last a favorite ran up to expectations, and Rowland had some small consolation from steering Irish Jig in winner of the Brokers' Cup. On the second day Captain Webb rode little Tulloch in the Golightly Stakes and won it for Jack Lowis, beating Bravo, Cocoa and Wagunyah. Four only accepted for Durbangah's Cup, Harry having scratched Exbank. Miladi, Blaze, Velocity and Referee were left in. Mr. Gregory's mare won by a head after a dingdong finish with Captain North on Blaze, Wool's fine riding getting the best of the amateur. Mermaid, a dead outsider, won the Assistants' Race for Dick Summers, easily beating seven others. White Wings placed the Merchants' Cup to Mr. Fenton's credit, and then midst loud cheers Knightsbridge brought the black and yellow of the absent Laird of Lall Serryah first past the post for the Beck Pilsener Cup. Then a match took place between Unknown and Isa, loser to give his pony to winner; the latter won and the Eurasian gent owning Unknown refused to part, till Harry settled matters by handing the pony to Mr. Holden, and as the dark gentleman still remonstrated, Harry flung him over the rails and no more was heard of him. On Monday Ross Palmer gave the public another sell, winning Messrs. Bourne and Shepherd's Purse with Full Moon; Exbank carrying top weight won the Civilians' Cup easily from Blaze, Bad Spec, Volant, Camaltha and Miss King. Tulloch beat the favorite, Bravo on the post for Messrs. Cutler Palmer's Purse, Captain Webb and Rowland riding a desperate finish. Referee won the Trades' Cup, The Fern

Cooch Behar's Cup, and Dragon Messrs. Elkington's Vase. Altogether the racing was good and the purses equally divided. On Friday the Planters played the Queen's at polo and beat them badly. R. Hudson, Jack Barclay, Victor Hickley and Sandilands represented the Blues; Taylor, Glasgow, Cowper and another officer, the Queen's. The Behar Wanderers also put a cricket team in the field against the Queen's, which match they pulled off with eighty odd runs to spare. Jack Campbell played a strong innings in the match and, when out, he had a total of 68 to his credit. Of other entertainments, there was a musical evening given by the members of the regimental camp round a bonfire on Sunday evening; while the whole camp was invited to a very prettily arranged programme of *tableaux vivants* at "Earleswood" on Monday evening. The scenes represented were: four taken from Robin Grey, two from the poem "Home they brought her Warrior dead" and three from "Where are you going my pretty Maid?" They were all very well rendered, especially the one where the widow was weeping over the body of her "warrior dead"; singing and music accompanied each scene from behind the stage. On Tuesday afternoon, a little gymkhana was held; it included a race for all ponies bought in the Fair, an *Eka* race, *Gyla* race and a jumping competition. The pony race for Messrs. Framjee and Co.'s Cup, was won by a pony belonging to Captain Vansittart, with ease.

The native fair was dirty and crowded as it always is; the ponies were as numerous as ever, but in class somewhat below the average. Until the very end, the fair kept very healthy, but as it was breaking up cholera was reported to have appeared. An elephant also caused a little diversion, as it went *mast*, and getting into the crowd successfully placed two men and a woman *hors de combat*. The European *tamasha* was over by the 11th, and what with wild elephants and a cholera scare, the native portion quickly

dispersed. At the last supper, in response to Harry's bidding, absent Jimmy's health was drunk with Highland honors. Mr. Forbes proposed the Secretary's health, saying there were few Secretaries who could say like theirs, that he had seen the mothers of several of those present wooed and won at Sonapore twenty or more years before. The Queen's boys carried Harry round the room and nearly spilt him a dozen times. As a memento of an enjoyable meeting the Stewards presented him with a very handsome piece of plate. Young Morshead, the Hajee pore Magistrate, met with a nasty accident while riding in the gymkhana; trying to break *gylas* he ran a pointed bamboo into his leg, just missing the femoral artery, but he was amply consoled for his accident, for he got engaged during the meeting to Miss Hill, daughter of the best and bravest planter Lower Bengal ever boasted of, Archie Hills, now alas gathered to his fathers.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

YEAR 1893.

Chupra sustained a regrettable loss when Jim Bourdillon, who had done so much for volunteering and cricket, as well as Sonapore, was transferred to the Board of Revenue early in 1893, the more so as his successor and schoolfellow, George Manisty, though a good fellow, knew nothing of racing, and was not, like his predecessor, in touch with the entire Behar community. Hamilton Gordon, the popular and hospitable Judge, had been replaced by Mr. Kelleher, a complete recluse, so a funeral pal seemed to have fallen over a station, which only a year before was famous for its hospitality and conviviality. The Sonapore racing programme, however, appeared with commendable punctuality, Mr. Manisty replacing Mr. Bourdillon on the Stewards' list, while Colonel St. Paul and Mr. George Paget of the Rifle Brigade were welcome additions. The

first entries were promising, local owners showing up well. Mr. Arther Forbes, the sporting Patna Commissioner, always encouraged the local officials to visit Sonapore, holding, and rightly, that they learnt more during those ten days of the community they lived amongst, than during the whole of the rest of the year. From the commencement of his Behar career, when as Magistrate of Tajpore, he cleared his sub-division of *budmashes* and jackals, Arthur had ever loved a good horse and *pour encourager les autres*, he in 1893 bought at Weekes' sale that well-bred mare Lady Roseberry, as well as the weight carrying sprinter Wabba, to carry his light blue colors at Sonapore, and won with them too; loud were the cheers as Lady Roseberry and Wabba fought out the issue for the Civilians' Cup; his old friend Charley Hay-Webb had kindly trained them on his capital course at Mooktapore. Mr. Gye, a *nom de course* but faintly veiling the identity of the popular Mozufferpore medico, who was, ere he came to Behar, a shining light among Assam racing planters, had bought Profit and Lord Hopetoun from Green, the importer, and the horses had been trained at Mozufferpore by Mr. Thomas, an experienced cross-country and flat gentleman rider, who had come out from England to amuse himself by riding and training for "Groggy" Gregson, who under his racing name of Mr. Charles, also weighed in with numerous entries for Sonapore. The Rifle Brigade entered several, and the Chupra sportsmen, Arthur Vincent, who in September had married Miss Boileau, poor Sammy Ayres and Harry Boileau were well represented; Rowland Hudson had two good ponies, Mavis and Sir Hugh, both bred at Lall Serryah, but for the first time for many years not a single entry came in under the name of Mr. John. He was still at home. Victor Hickley, Phil the Fluter, and Ross Palmer, with Rowland Hudson worthily upheld the reputation of Ottur as a sporting centre, and Jack Barclay's evergreen Blaze figured among those anxious to pull off some of the big events.

How often of late years had newspaper critics been forced to write of Sonepore "Socially delightful, racingly poor," but of 1893, "an all round success" may honestly be written. A big new stable had sprung up at Mozufferpore, which, under the able management of that experienced G.R., Mr. L. Thomas, seemed likely to sweep the board. Calcutta sportsmen poured in their entries, and Mr. C. Hay-Webb was known to have several good ones among his string at Mooktapore, while Rowland Hudson and his rare "Oirish boy," Mr. Phil Murray, weighed in with a few good enough to come occasionally to the fore. So, from the very first, it was evident we were not to have a one horse show, but really open racing. The Princes of Durbangah, Hutwa, Doomraon and Cooch Behar had all responded royally to the yearly call on them for Purses; the Calcutta Merchants, Brokers and Tradesmen had also cordially weighed in with handsome cups and donations; while the heart of every fair maid who was invited there fluttered with anticipation of a rarely good time; and could caustic Teddy Drummond or that bravest of brave non-combatants, dear old Fraser McDonell, have been able like Asmodeus to float over the tent tops; they would have acknowledged their successors had not allowed their favorite old recreation ground to deteriorate.

But while the lads and lassies thoroughly enjoyed themselves, there was pleasurable pain to the older ones present in calling back to recollection the old faces that in days of yore used to frequent the grand stand, when if a hundred all told were present it was considered a record meeting. Large hearted Monty Turnbull, proud owner of the gallant Arab Hermit, and whose menagerie at the Hermitage, long before the Zoo was started in Calcutta, was a thing of delight to Mrs. Turnbull, but a source of supreme annoyance to the Ooryah bearers of the household; rubicund Charley Palmer, cleverest of medicos and straightest of racing men, bright-

eyed Teddy Oakes and that hardy Highlander McLeod of Skye and Chupra; gaunt Wallace, the grand old snip who reared countrybreds at Monghyr good enough to win Vice-roy's Cups; Vincent, the Barrh Magistrate, and his erratic but popular brother-in-law mad Simmy; Lord Ulick Browne, Edward Studd, Ned Urquhart, Colonel Robarts and wealthy Seth Apcar, who as Mr. Payne, was a lion of the turf in those days—these and heaps of others used to watch Nash, the Irvings, Gooch, Joseph, Blackburn, long Hall, Hackney, Challoner, Finch, Donaldson and the wiry Jaffir do many a desperate finish for the Bettiah and Doomraon Cups of those days. And the winners of those races were generally prime favorites for the blue ribbons of the Calcutta Meetings. Poor Albert Mangles, who loved Sonapore dearly, and many more were missed sorely. And much did his legion of friends again regret the absence of one dear to them all, the King of Chumparun, hospitable Jimmy McLeod, who did not return to India till the meet was over.

Harry Boileau, as Clerk of the Course, had made many improvements, and, thanks to the generosity of H.H. the Maharajah of Hutwa, a new ball room floor was laid down. An office for the Secretary was also erected near Behari Singh's well, outside the enclosure railing put up three years ago, and which had long ago paid for itself.

The first camp observable, as one entered, was occupying the old Lall Serryah site, and was the abode of the officers engaged in carrying out the Cadastral Catastrophe. Colonel Sandeman, Messrs. C. H. Macpherson, P. C. Lyon, Elliot Colvin, E. Macnaghten, Crighton, Symons and Warburton were the party. Opposite them, alone in all his glory, reigned Mr. C. J. O'Donnell, Collector of Patna, and next came the snug tents of Hugh Llewellyn, among whose guests was his brother George, erst Manager of Durbangah, out for a short cold weather tour. Passing down to the right were then seen

in their old quarters the numerous tents composing the popular camp of Mr. Bob Lockhart, round whom had flocked a host of choice spirits whose fun and humour made the very canvas snigger with glee—cannie Duncan Macpherson, Collector of Gya, as yet unscathed by love's young dream; Farquhar McKinnon, the burly chief of Bubnowlie; Jack Campbell the cricketer; trusty Bosun Elliot, loquacious Tim, with the pedigree and performances of every racer present, at his fingers' ends; D. M. Lumsden, that *beau sabreur* of the Assam Valley Mounted Rifles; Fergusson, prince of Moorshedabad pigstickers; several new and callow youths, and, last but not least, two grave and reverend seniors from Calcutta, Messrs. Cairns Deas and Keith Douglas. Snugly ensconced between Messrs. Lockhart's and Boileau's camps was the abode of bliss raised by Mozufferpore's popular policeman, Colonel Ramsay, who had bidden from Calcutta as guests Sir William Jardine, Messrs. Gregson, Stuart and Thomas, as well as two local swains—Mr. Baxter, a learned advocate of the Mozufferpore Bar, and Mr. Gibson, a mighty handler of the willow. Among the ladies of this camp were the Misses Morey, two fair maids from Behrampore, one of them a heroine and both accomplished horsewomen; well might their brave old dad be proud of such a pair of winsome lassies. Large loomed the white walls of Mr. Boileau's camp, and over thirty daily placed their legs under his mahogany. The sporting son of a sporting sire, bright "Glass" Vincent and Harry Boileau both had invested in race horses, but they were not fortunate enough to secure winning brackets. The Rifle Brigade had two of their officers in this camp, Messrs. Paget and Paley, and the military were further represented by Captain Middleton in quest of remounts, and that cleverest of V.S.'s Captain Gunn, who was on duty judging the fair horses for prizes with Harry Abbott. Herbert Holmwood and several others completed the merry gathering. Then came the

leviathan camp of Mr. Arthur Forbes, with whom was that *bon raconteur* Mr. A. C. Brett, whose last year this was at Sonapore, for he retired shortly from a service of which he had been an invaluable officer; Major Hawkeshaw, from the Dinapore Battery, whose soothing tootlings on a brass bugle nightly lulled to slumber every baby in the camp and enraptured the adults; "Chuckie" Macguire, brother of the well-known Member of Parliament, a most useful adjunct to the lottery room, and a born stump orator; Charley Hay-Webb, the successful trainer of Lady Rosebery, Wabba and old Referee; Apples, worthy descendant of the mighty Nimrod, now alas grown too fat to ride feather weights; that king of the whist table; H. C. Williams, now bossing the Calcutta Municipal Baboos, but well-known and liked by Assam planters; and a legion of future Lieutenant-Governors headed by the sportive Egerton of Sitamarhi, who had been taught how to ride finishes by that experienced Archer, the Shrimp truly a goodly lot. Then next, in all their glory, shone one of the most popular regiments that has ever garrisoned Dinapore—The Queen's, whose officers had turned up in force to this their last Sonapore, and right royally did they dispense hospitality, their camp being almost every night the *rendezvous* for everyone. Long will Behar remember the gallant Queen's, and much will they be missed. From Colonel Ilderton down to the youngest Sub., from the day they arrived at Dinapore they did their best to be hospitable and friendly and succeeded admirably in their endeavours. *Vale*; good fellows all. Opposite the Queen's, was the encampment of that benign old Marlburian, Mr. G. E. Manisty, who struck terror into the cow killing agitators of the Chupra District; many had he bidden but many had disappointed, though Calcutta sent him one of its ablest lawyers, Mr. Robertson; Mr. G. C. Dey was also one of his guests. Mr. Mills from Bankipore, than whom no better host exists, had, as he used to in the old Gya days, a heap of visitors and—as

befits a gay bachelor—half a score of ladies to grace his pretty shamiana. Mozufferpore's genial Collector, Mr. L. Hare, had gathered round him a well chosen lot of friends—the Barclays from Motipore, the Streatfields, the Hudsons and George Hennessy, Lord of Muttrapore, who pronounced Sonepore *the* place above all in which to spend "an 'appy 'oliday." Last on the line came the camp of George Disney, the talented District Engineer of Tirhoot, who had innumerable Mozufferpore friends to fill his tents.

The racing throughout was excellent, the finishes close, the favorites frequently beaten, the fields large and the prizes equally divided, no one went away either losing or winning heavily. It was regretted that neither Mr. E. H. Gregory nor Mr. G. Paget scored a win after coming all the way from Calcutta.

The balls were distinctly successful, though the room was scarcely big enough, and it was resolved to enlarge it either next year or the year after. Messrs. Framji as caterers surpassed themselves, and, considering the enormous difficulties they had to contend against in such an isolated spot, richly deserved a decoration for their excellent management. Above all the wine was superb. At Saturday night's supper Mr. Forbes proposed the Honorary Secretary's health, which was drunk with all honors, and that ancient's reply would have drawn tears from the eyes of a dead jackal. So ended the Sonepore Race Meet. of 1893, over which the Stewards might will have sung *O jubilate! O jubilate!*

These reminiscences would be incomplete if they did not chronicle the history of that fine old fellow Tom the Barber, who in his Highland dress and silver belt and chains is one of Sonepore's chief celebrities; a prime favorite with everyone of the older generation is Tom, and every year he turns up to shave his patrons and get his customary ten or twenty rupees present from each. Much service has Tom seen; born in 1835

at Meerut, where his father was barber to the 44th Regiment, he was the pet of the soldiers, till at the ill-fated Khyber Pass in 1842, when only Brydon escaped, the barber was among the killed. The widow then brought little Tom to Chupra, where she had relatives. When the 80th Regiment came back from the Punjab campaign and was sent to Dinapore in 1849, Tom's elder brother, Hira Lall, who was barber to the Regiment, sent for the youngster and taught him the art of shaving. In 1853 Tom went with the Regiment to Burma, and was present at the night attack on, and capture of, Martaban, also the taking of Rangoon, where he remained two years. In 1855 the Regiment came to Dum Dum, where it broke up; but Captain Christie and Dr. Taylor went with a body of volunteers to join the 78th Regiment then at Poona, Tom accompanied them, and after staying there a year, followed them to Persia, where he witnessed the taking of Bushire Fort, Khoushab, and Mahamra, was there seven months, then back to Calcutta. During the stirring times of the Mutiny he was first stationed at Chinsurah, under the gallant Outram, and saw Havelock disarm the mutinous Sepoys. In those days Ranee-gunge was the terminus of the E.I.R., and thence the 78th marched to Bilung Sihair, where it defeated the mutineers, and away to Fatehpore, which was sacked and looted, then to Cawnpore, where the battle raged all day on the open *maidan*, about twenty thousand mutineers facing the four thousand British and loyal native troops. The 78th, the 64th, the Madras Fusiliers, two companies of Sikhs, and Captain Morris' bullock battery from Benares, were the troops in action. George Augustus Stack, now at Bankipore, was one of the Volunteer Cavalry. They fought all day, camping on the open fields at night, and next day attacked Cawnpore and carried the Cavalry Barracks, the mutineers skedaddling during the night, though ere going the fiends murdered poor Miss Wheeler, daughter of the General; Nana Row, the foul Mahratta, got off, and was supposed to

have taken with him many unfortunate English women. After sacking Cawnpore, the regiment started for Lucknow, fought at Umritsur, Mungulwara and Busiratgunge, but owing to the road being blocked by overwhelming hordes of mutineers, was unable to reach its destination and had to retreat to Cawnpore, but being reinforced in a few days, it took the road again, and fought at Nawabgunge, and afterwards for three days and nights outside the Alum Bagh, rain pelting down on the conflicting forces the whole time. In the Amena Bazar, when they got into Lucknow, they sustained heavy firing from both sides of the street, till Henry Havelock ordered his men to fix bayonets, storm the houses, and heave the mutineers into the street. Tom had a cut or two at several of the curs. The 78th being in the rear were terribly cut up. Captain Moore's Artillery were in front. Drs. Lee and Macmaster, who nobly earned the Victoria Cross, attended to the wounded. At night the English drove back the rebels, and gained the shelter of the Residency, where they were besieged two months; the 32nd had been there six months. Tom was instrumental in saving Miss Boileau, who was slightly lame. From the other side of the Gumti the rebels kept up night and day an unceasing fusilade. Then Sir Colin Campbell arrived, and poor Havelock died and was buried in the Alum Bagh. Lucknow was stormed and fell after seven months' fighting, and shortly afterwards came the welcome news that Delhi had fallen, and when the troops heard it, they threw their caps into the air and made the walls re-echo to their cheers. Hell-Fire Jack Olphert, a connection of Tunbling Tommy's, was conspicuous for his bravery throughout the siege. At Bareilly Tom's regiment fought those brave mutineers the red-puggried long-booted Pathan cavalry, and horrible was the revenge dealt out to them, for when they were routed and retreating, the sweepers caught dozens of them, poured oil over, set fire to, and then threw

them down wells. The 78th stopped at Bareilly when the Mutiny was over and Tom went to Dinapore. Then he joined the 79th Highlanders at Lucknow and went to Mian Mir. Tom was thirteen years with this fine regiment, following it to Ferozepore, Nowshera, Attock, Peshawar and Komti. When it went home in 1879 he joined the 72nd Regiment at Deolali in the Bombay Presidency, staying eight years at Umballa and Peshawar; he accompanied the 79th to Afghanistan, waiting two months at Kohat for Shir Ali Khan, the Amir, to meet General Roberts, but the wily Afghan never turned up. Shortly afterwards orders were given that no barbers were to be allowed to go to the front, so Tom went home to Chupra, where he has since remained, having bought a little land. He was greatly grieved this year at the loss of his only son, of whom he was very fond. Tom is a most amusing old fellow, but never intrusive; he has a wonderful memory, and it is very interesting to hear his anecdotes about the various regiments he has served with. There is a good story told about him and Antony Patrick Macdonnell. When the latter first went to Chupra as Collector, he sent for Tom to shave him and began pumping him about the planters of the district, but Tom shut him up, neatly saying, "I never go about gossiping; Sir, a still tongue makes no enemies."

CHAPTER XL.

YEAR 1894.

In April 1894 died at home one of the most popular of the Sonepore Stewards and again the *Indian Planters' Gazette* had the sad task of writing the obituary of one of Behar's best planters. The Editor said:—"We little thought when bidding poor Willie Elliot, Godspeed, on his leaving for a trip home, scarcely two months ago, that we had wrung his honest hand for the last time—but alas! that it should be so; this week's

mail brought the sad news of his death, which occurred the very day fortnight after he reached England. It had been known to most of his chief friends for some time that his heart was seriously affected; but his cheery disposition, and strong steadfastness of purpose, made him stick to work instead of taking the rest so necessary for one suffering from so dangerous a complaint, and it was only the serious warnings of his medical advisers and the affectionate persuasions of friends that induced him to throw up his arduous work at Nowada and go home for treatment. But the weakness begotten by fretting over the death of a beloved wife, the anxieties and responsibilities of the two poor motherless bairns she had left to his sole care, added to the worries of managing a property requiring the most unceasing vigilance and economical working, told upon a constitution that was initially perfect; and when to this was added the excitement of meeting all those near and dear to him at home, the weakened frame collapsed, and he died, we can only hope, painlessly. Another of the good old lot gone; a worthy scion of one of the best of the pioneer families, who won India for England; there never was an Elliot out here yet, that was not true grit to the core. Of an exceptionally sweet nature, the poor old 'Bo'sun' was a splendid specimen of a Behar planter. Held in solid esteem by Civilians, beloved by his brother planters, and heartily respected by his native servants and tenants—for they could trust him implicitly—Willie Elliot, in all truth, never made an enemy. Gentle as a woman, his poor little children will miss him sorely, for his affection for and tender care of them after their mother's death was one of the finest traits in an almost faultless character. Many a tear will spring to the eyes of his lady friends in Chupra, and many a rough planter's lip will quiver on hearing of the sudden death of that simple-hearted but sterling good fellow. 'Bo'sun' Elliot's sorrowing relatives have our sincerest sympathies."

Among the many constant visitors to Sonapore Bob Lockhart's brother, Tim, is ever conspicuous; Skin Wilson drew a very clever caricature of him, which appeared in the *I.P.G.* in April and under which Harry Abbott penned the following doggel lines:—

“ You still are well preserved Tim
And though not married yet,
Some buxom monied widow
May claim you for her pet ;

And tho' your locks are scanty,
Your figure still keeps slim,
At heart there's not a better chap
Than garrulous old Tim.”

Nor is there. Tim is a thoroughly good chap and can handicap cleverly. Very welcome to the Sarun planters, and the Sonapore Stewards in particular, was the news that Mr. F. A. Slack was appointed Collector and Mr. H. Place, Judge of the District, and all looked forward in consequence, to a rattling good meeting; nor were they disappointed. To the race powers of organisation possessed by Mr. Slack, visitors owed two of the best Sonepores on record.

In June, the *Indian Planters' Gazette* published a *resumé* of Lord William Beresford's Indian racing career. It is curious that though Fighting Bill has at various times sent several ponies and horses to carry his colors at Sonapore, he only once visited the meeting. During June we heard of the sad death at home of one whose cheery face had often been seen watching the races from the Sonapore Stand—brave and straight General Montagu James Turnbull. Again had Harry Abbott the painful task of penning the obituary of one of his oldest and kindest friends. Monty was so well known and beloved by the old frequenters of Sonapore, that an extract from his career will not be out of place in this record of his favorite Mofussil race meeting.

"Among the deaths in England of old Indians we notice, with deep regret, that of General Montagu James Turnbull, who in the 'fifties' and 'sixties' was one of the leading lights of the Calcutta race meetings. He was a Steward of the Turf Club from 1861 till he retired on pension in 1874, and acted for many years as head of the Army Clothing Department. Colonel and Mrs. Turnbull lived at Alipore in that snug little bungalow still known as 'The Hermitage,' and which was christened after his bonny Arab, Hermit, winner of many races on this course. The grand steeds of The Desert had no stauncher friend and admirer than 'Monty' Turnbull, and though he never had the luck to win the then blue ribbon of India's Turf, it was not for want of trying. Writing of him in *The Englishman* after the big meeting of 1866, his old crony and bosom friend, W. H. Abbott said :—

'Now once more Pippas forget the past and tell us who they be

Who stand among the horses there, collected round that tree ;

I turned and looked and Monty stood amid his Arab pets
And with friend Pritchard showed their points to two
admiring Vets.

And happy as a king he'll be that sportsman good as gold,
Altho' it seems hard lines to him that Hermit should
grow old ;

If he can only hit upon some little Arab pet,

That will answer all his yearnings and win the Derby
yet.'

"Not one of the old lot that were Stewards of the Calcutta meeting in 1861 are now in India; the majority are dead, though Lord Ulick Browne still lives in honorable retirement in London; but Oh, what Arab racing used to be seen on the Calcutta course in those years! A dozen would frequently go out, and from start to finish the proverbial blanket would have covered the

lot. Good old Sheik Esau Bin Kurtas then had the stables now occupied by Veterinary-Surgeon Lauter, and many a Derby winner hailed from his stalls. There is, we believe, only one sportsman now left in Calcutta of the many that used to race in those days, a gentleman whose name was held in the highest esteem, for through a long and deservedly honoured career he ever went straight as a die—we allude to Mr. G. M. Blacker. Aye, they were a fine old lot who supported the Turf then, Officers of Her Majesty's Service; Civilians and Merchants—men who raced for the love of the game and the horse too, and who kept up the grandest sport in the world, without dragging into it native millionaires, most of whom care not a brass farthing for either horses or sport itself, but merely join in because it introduces them to European society, and brings their names prominently before the public. H.H. of Cooch Behar is one of the notable exceptions. As poor Surgeon-Colonel Gaye wrote us only a few days before his death, there was real *camaraderie* among the old bloods of the turf. In those days professionals were not too numerous, and light weight ones few and far between, so G.R.'s had a far better time than now, for the *Burra Sahebs*, not only did not mind our getting up in chases, but when they found youngsters who *could* ride, they would buy horses for the fun of seeing us steer them; and is there anything in this life to equal the keen enjoyment felt, when with a good, fit, sound nag under you, pitted against your best pals, you go sailing away over three miles of sensibly built fences? Australia's only poet, poor Adam Lindsay Gordon, describes it well, and why?—because he experienced it times without number :—

Oh the vigour with which the Earth is rife,

The spirit of joyous motion ;

The fever, the fulness of animal life

Can be drained from no earthly potion.

The lungs with the living gas grow light,
And the limbs feel the strength of ten ;
And the chest expands with its maddening might,
God's glorious oxygen.

Thus the measured stroke on elastic sward,
Of the steed three parts extended ;
Hard held, the breath of his nostrils broad.
With the golden ether blended.

Then the leap, the rise from the springy turf,
The rush through the buoyant air ;
And the light shock landing—the veriest serf,
Is an Emperor then and there.

“ None save those who have ridden and loved it, can comprehend the ecstasy of a stern steeplechase fought out to the last. Although Colonel Turbull did not in his latter days ride himself, he was no mean horseman, and after a pig or over a country he was bad to beat. He had the love of the horse born in him, and as a leader of Indian sport, a greater favorite could not have existed, for he was universally trusted and loved. He virtually edited for some time our then only sporting organ—*The Oriental Sporting Magazine*—and to him everyone turned for aid and advice. Curiously enough tailors had a lot to do with the Turf then, for Major Turnbull was head of the Army Clothing Department, the Clerk of the Course was his head assistant, Mr. Pritchard, and the Starter that prince of sportsmen, the Poole of those days, Mr. Wallace, the fashionable sartorial artist, who with horses of his own breeding won two or three Viceroy's Cups. There have been few better lady riders in India than Mrs. Turnbull, who was a Miss Apperley, a daughter of the mighty “Nimrod.” Horace Hayes says of her :—

“ ‘ Mrs. Turbull was one of the most accomplished horsewomen we have ever had in the East. Her brilliant riding stood

her in good stead in the many dangers she passed through by her husband's side and which would have crushed a less dauntless spirit. Although she was everything that was soft, winning and womanly, her heart knew no fear. During the time of the Sind Mutiny she rode along with her husband at the head of his regiment, which was disaffected, 129 marches from Umballa to Shikarpur, where the mutiny burst out. They were encamped in the month of July under canvas at Roree on the Indus, with the thermometer ranging from 127° to 130°F. daily in the shade. Strange to say, during that heat they had only one man sick in hospital, although after they reached their head-quarters at Shikarpur to Muttra, they rode over the late battlefield of Ferozeshah to reach their camp. When proceeding with the Bombay column from Sukkur *en route* for Mooltan, before the surrender of that fort, Sir Charles Napier stopped the regiment, at the head of which were the Colonel and his wife, to compliment her on the example she had set during her two years' stay in Sind. Sir Charles and his staff often drank a toast after dinner to 'The Star of the Desert' as they used to call her. She was present with her husband at Shikarpur during the Sind Mutiny, when that wily old General, George Hunter, induced a Native Infantry Regiment to proceed to Sukkur to have their supposed grievances inquired into, and then trapped them on arrival by a wing of the 13th Light Infantry and a masked battery of European artillery. This *ruse* resulted in about sixty of the mutinous ringleaders being given up on threat of the regiment being annihilated. Fifty were transported for life and eight were hanged on one gallows. Seven of the latter spared all trouble to the executioner by jumping off the platform and thereby strangling themselves, while the eighth continued to call on his regiment to come to his rescue until the bolt was drawn.'

"She took her handsome Arab Cuckoo home with her, and used to ride him regularly in the Park ; we believe the old

horse is still alive. Hermes went home too, but died of sun-stroke in the Red Sea. Mrs. Turnbull was passionately fond of dumb animals and 'The Hermitage' was a regular menagerie—squirrels, dogs, birds, monkeys, were collected by her in numbers and very tenderly cared for, while the stables were always full of thoroughbreds, mostly Arabs.

"Among the Colonel's best Arabs was Hermit, a flea-bitten grey; he ran second to Rocket for the Calcutta Derby of 1860, but he ran the same horse a dead heat in the Great Welter; he won the Calcutta Stakes, two miles, beating the Australian Ellerton in 3mins. 51secs. He got beaten by two lengths in the Trades Cup in 1862 by the English mare Voltege, who ran the two miles in 3mins. 46secs. Opal was another of the Colonel's Arabs that was a very handsome horse. Mrs. Turnbull took him to England in 1862 and he took first prize in the Arab class at the Islington Show. Starlight, late Mangosteen, was a beautiful bay, which he won in a raffle of the old Sheik's.

"General Turnbull died at the ripe age of 75 at his residence at Southwick, near Brighton, called 'The Hermitage' after his old bungalow at Alipore. His official record—which is taken from *The Statesman*—is as follows:—

"Montagu James Turnbull joined the 7th Bengal Cavalry as a cornet in 1836, and was promoted Lieutenant in 1841. He first saw active service with his regiment in Sir Charles Napier's famous desert campaigns in Sind in 1844-45, when that general endeavoured to settle the turbulent frontier of the province he had recently conquered. He was senior lieutenant in his regiment when the news arrived of the murder of Mr. Vans Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson at Mooltan in 1848. One of the forces at once organised to operate against the Sikhs was formed in Sind and placed under the command of Colonel Hugh Wheeler of the 48th Bengal Native Infantry, better known as the unfortunate Sir

Hugh Wheeler, who fell at Cawnpore during the Mutiny; it included the 7th Bengal Cavalry, and acted on the left of the main army which, under Lord Gough, fought the battles of Chilianwala and Gujrat, and Lieutenant Montagu Turnbull served during the greater part of the campaign as officiating Quarter-Master-General to the force. He was specially mentioned in Sir Hugh Wheeler's despatch, and was rewarded for his military services on the annexation of the Punjab by being removed to civil employ and posted as Assistant Commissioner in the Punjab in April 1849. He did not long remain in the Punjab, however, for, after being promoted captain in June 1851, he was appointed Agent for Army Clothing at Fort William in December of the same year.

“When the news of the mutiny of the Bengal Army, of the loss of Delhi, and of the general spread of the revolt, reached the capital, something of a panic seized on Calcutta society, and, after one abrupt refusal, Lord Canning gave permission, on 11th June 1857, for the enlistment of a body of volunteers. The Calcutta Volunteer Guards were divided into cavalry and infantry, and Captain Turnbull was placed in command of the former force. Colonel G. B. Malleeson, who was at this time resident in Calcutta, speaks of Montagu Turnbull as “a splendid specimen of a cavalry officer. . . . Not only was he ‘every inch a soldier,’ possessing an inspiring presence and most genial manners, but he was loved by all with whom he came in contact. I never heard a single man speak ill of him, nor do I believe that he had an enemy. He was the man of all others to secure the confidence and affection of the classes forming the cavalry of the volunteers, and he secured both.” (Malleeson's *History of the Indian Mutiny*, vol. VI., p. 17.) The Calcutta Volunteer Guards, though they attained considerable proficiency on parade and did good service in restoring confidence among the European residents in Calcutta, were not called on to take the field, and so Captain

Turnbull had no opportunity of distinguishing himself during the great struggle. But his merits were recognised, and he received rapid promotion. In February 1861 he was gazetted Major in the newly-raised 2nd Bengal European Cavalry, in June of next year he was promoted Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, and in February 1863 he joined the Bengal Staff Corps as Lieutenant-Colonel. In the following year he was made Superintendent and Agent for Army Clothing in Calcutta, a post which he held until he left India in 1874. In 1876 he was promoted Colonel, in 1879 Major-General, in 1881 Lieutenant-general and in 1889 General.' "

Poor Bertie Short, one of India's most brilliant horsemen and who had been settled at Gyeghat in Chupra for some years, had had to give up race riding owing to gout, and he most unfortunately succumbed to that painful complaint early in June; although he has given to Indian readers a most amusing account of his own racing recollections in "Between the Indian Flags," yet what was written at his death in the *I. P. G.* will be interesting to all who knew the harum scarum original, but who may not have seen the issue of the Gazette in which it was published.

"The death at the comparatively young age of forty-five removes from the ranks of Indian sportsmen one of its best known members, for the man who rode with a hook was ten years ago one of the most familiar figures at North-West fixtures. A son of Colonel Short, R. E., one of the truest and bravest gentlemen that ever wore her Majesty's uniform, William Bertie was born in India and sent home in early youth for education. After short terms at two or three Preparatory Schools he was sent to Marlborough being a somewhat junior contemporary of several old Marlburians still in India, Mr. G. E. Manisty, Accountant General, Mr. J. A. Bourdillon, Board of Revenue, Captain J. Hext C.I.E., Indian Marine, Mr. Robertson Pughe, Bengal Police, Mr. Herbert Spry of Tirhoot and Harry Abbott, and others.

He proved as big a madcap at school as he did afterwards through most of his adventurous career in this country. After leaving Marlborough he was sent to Hodson's, the then well-known London crammer, to try for the Indian Civil Service, but the many escapades he played there made old Hodson so sick that the latter asked him to seek fresh fields ; and then Mr. Hughes of Ealing took him in hand, but he nearly blew the whole school up practising gunnery and had to leave in consequence. Messrs. D'Artois and Watkins of St. John's Wood got him through for Direct Commissions at Chelsea and he came out to this country, but instead of going in for the army he joined the North-West Police in 1870, and was gazetted to Bareilly, being afterwards sent to Pilibheet, where he showed his grit in a row that occurred between the rival races of Hindoos and Mahommedans. Unfortunately the two feasts of the Ramnomi and Mohurram fell on the same day, and in spite of the sensible arrangements made by the Collector, Mr. White, the two factions got to logger-heads and a regular Donnybrook was the result. Messrs. White and Short in endeavouring to quiet the mob were mobbed and assaulted, as also was a respectable native Honorary Magistrate who tried to reason with the ringleaders. As a last resource Bertie Short got the Magistrate's leave to fire on the rioters which had the result of putting them to flight, leaving five men severely wounded. Of course a Commission was appointed to enquire into the affair and the officers were not only exonerated but praised for their action which undoubtedly saved the town from being wrecked. In 1872 Bertie, who had ere this proved himself a rare good man after pig, or over a country after the wily jack, began to develop a love for racing and particularly for steeplechasing, which never left him. His first mount in the pigskin with the colours up was at Bareilly on Colonel Pennycuick's Australian mare Lassie in the Hurdle Race, which he won easily. In November 1872

he was transferred to Mozuffernuggur and during the cold season won several chases at Dehra, Umballa and Meerut. In 1873 he applied for and got appointed to Dehra and here he was in his element, for the pretty little station was then in its zenith as a training centre and was filled with sportsmen, prominent among them, that grand old soldier Colonel Robarts, Colonel Need, David Papillon, Captain Maxwell, Abdool Ghyas, Captain Phillip, Dr. Sewell, Kelly Maitland, Joe Rainford, and Bricky Collins the contractor, Dr. Marmaduke Tippets, and Oscar Dignum the professional who taught Bertie how to ride with judgment and finish. At Lucknow that year Bertie won one of his best ridden chases; nine started, Horace Hayes on that sweet mare Brown Duchess, Captain Franks, one of the best G. R.'s that ever flung boot over saddle, on the favourite, Time, David Papillon who, short-legged and thick set as he was, was an artist as far as hands and judgment of pace went, Captain Grant on Sunbeam, Mr. Hartwell on Marquis, Fred Welcome, the professional, afterwards Messrs. Hart Bros' trusty head man, on Harkaway, an uncommonly nice looking chestnut Australian, Bertie on War Eagle, then Joe Rainford's property, O'Conner on Hildegard and Crook on Major Harris' Duke. Owing to the crass stupidity of the owl who was responsible for the building of the course, the first fence would scarcely permit of five horses jumping it abreast, and as there were nine starters, grief was inevitable. Time, Harkaway, Sunbeam, Hildegard and Brown Duchess, all collided and fell, and War Eagle won easily. On the same game horse he won the Grand Annual and the Handicap Chase at Dehra. At the Umballa Spring Meeting he won the Handicap Steeplechase on David Papillon's Doctor. At Bareilly he once more steered War Eagle to the front. In the chase, a terribly big bank which Marmaduke Tippets had erected purposely to stop War Eagle was negotiated by this superb fencer in magnificent style, but the

other two starters never got over it. At Assensole where he had not at first had an altogether good time, only winning a couple of flat races with Liberty, an English gelding by Blair Athol, he bought Daybreak in the selling race, and won the best part of his price back in the Colliery Hurdles. Daybreak had been the property of those well-known Tirhoot Planters Mr. Edmund Macnaghten and the late Mr. Fred Wingrove, best known to his familiars as Buggins. At Ballygunge in '74 Bertie foolishly rode War Eagle with one hand, having sprained his arm riding Merlin in the big chase at Assensole and lost the race in consequence. At Cawnpore he won the Leger with Daybreak and the Chase too. At Lucknow riding as Mr. Rinaldo, for he was absent from duty without leave, he won the Goomtee Chase on Mr. Baker's grey Arab Sikunder, and a mile flat handicap on his own mare Mermaid. At Meerut he won the Galloway Chase on Phratos, belonging to Mr. Percy Hills of the Rifle Brigade. Daybreak had by this time nearly broken him and he sold him and Mermaid to a native sportsman and went back to his head quarters Jhansi, but being unable to find any decent excuse for his two months' absence without leave, he was gazetted out, and the North-West Police lost a valuable if somewhat erratic officer. But though out of harness Bertie was not going to give up the game his soul loved so well, and he succeeded in inducing Joe Rainford to sell him a horse called Red Eagle, late Beggarman, and off he went to Lucknow and opened the ball by winning the Trials on Dr. Deane's Pilgrim, but in the chase Red Eagle refused. At Cawnpore he came a cropper off Dignum's Don Juan in the chase and broke his collar bone and a handful of his ribs on his right side, and he was three weeks in bed. At Dehra in September, 1874 he won the Handicap Chase on his old horse Daybreak, now belonging to Jaffer who had seized him for training dues from the nobleman Bertie had sold him to, the said nobleman being,

by the way, a Tirhoot butcher's son. Colonel Need soon after this bought Daybreak and once more Bertie got him home at Umballa in the Ladies' Plate Hurdle Race. At Meerut he won the Meerut Cup Chase on Shamrock, property of Colonel Montmorency of the 59th Regiment. At Agra he steered his old pet, War Eagle, to victory in the All Horse Chase and won the Arab and C. B. Chase on Shamrock and the Pony Chase on Charsley Thomas' Kitty—a grand day. At Ballygunge he would have won the cup on War Eagle, but went the wrong course when turning the home corner. At Lucknow he was again lucky enough to win the Goomtee and Handicap Chases on Firefly, who had never seen a jump till the day before the race. In 1875 Bertie was still living at Mussoorie but used to attend all the N.-W. fixtures regularly, and in May he was asked to buy a couple of nags by Mr. Charley Mangles and to take charge of and train them at Dehra, he bought that nice mare Finette from Kelly Maitland and he had Lothair and one or two others in his stable. It was there that he met with the terrible accident which deprived him of his right hand. One morning in June when cantering round the course on a beast of a country-bred entire, the brute refused a little drain the natives had dug across the course to let the water out of their fields when, as Bertie shook the reins, the beast turned round and seized him by the arm literally dragging him out of the saddle and having got him down set to pawing him, a regular rough and tumble ensued for fully ten minutes, no one being in sight to help. At last a native came by with a stick, and Bertie took it and by ramming it right down the pony's throat forced him to open his mouth, but both wrist bones were so hopelessly crushed that amputation was imperative. The head sawbones of the station wanted to amputate above the elbow, but his junior, Dr. Maclaren, said, "No; it need only come off from just above the injury," and Bertie pluckily suggested, when the ancient

one foretold a certainty of mortification that they could go on taking off slices as long as they left the elbow joint for with that he could, and without it he could not, ride again. Fortunately Dr. Maclaren proved right, and the patient was soon out and about again. His inventive genius did not let the loss of his hand bother him long, for while in bed he taught himself to write with his left hand and he got a local Mistree to make him a sort of bucket which fastened on to the elbow and into the end of which he could screw a knife or hook: the latter was a most useful implement, it came in grandly to open champagne or soda water with, and in a row proved a most unanswerable argument. He had perfect hands on a horse before, but even with this hook, he was still a master of the art of riding, and it was infinitely better to put him up than to risk your horse's chances to any average mutton-fisted lubber fancying himself a horseman; he had his reins made with loops and he could change his hold as quick with the hook as with his natural hand. In September he was in the saddle in the Grand Annual at Dehra on Horace Hayes' Free-trader and got second to Frank Johnson on Ring; he won a three-quarter flat race on Finette, and at Umballa he won the hurdle race with the same mare, which he had, since his accident, schooled for the jump game.

"At Umballa he won the mile and a half handicap on Finette easily, and the Full Cry Chase on Sikunder. At Allahabad, where Dr. Tippetts had got up a benefit, Bertie won a brilliantly ridden chase on Polly Studd's Not On. Down in Calcutta Finette won the Colonials and at last Bertie had a win at Ballygunge, getting War Eagle home in front of Colonist, a heap of good ones behind. In 1876 Daybreak while going a spurt fell down dead, having burst a blood-vessel in the brain. At Meerut that year Bertie was fairly successful with some of Mr. Geneste's horses; he won Mr. Collins' Purse on Mermaid and the Galloway Handicap Hurdle

Race on Dart. It was at the end of this year, just before the Delhi Assemblage, that Bertie persuaded Mr. Geneste to buy from Dignum, a grey hurdle racer called Wamambool, changed his name to Hurricane and started schooling the horse for chasing and went to the Delhi Assemblage confident of winning the Great Eastern Steeplechase, but on arrival there he found the C. T. C. had disqualified him from riding on account of his having failed to attend a meeting at which they wanted him to explain his having dismounted before passing the post in the Selling Race at Nusseerabad; so he had to stand down and put Major Humphrey up, the good grey gelding got home twenty lengths in front of Sweep with Mr. Bob Growdy in the saddle—eight started. At Lucknow 1877 Bertie was once more in the saddle, winning a very brilliantly ridden race on Nancy Lee, a rank outsider, beating Tingey on the favourite Tom, by a head in the Pony Race. At Dehra in October he won a good race in the Pony Chase, riding Mr. Skinner's Sultana, beating Lord William Beresford on the heavily backed Banker. Mr. Skinner won over five thousand by this race, but though he knew Bertie had not two farthings to rub together, he never put him on for a penny. On Wicked at the Dehra meeting of 1880 Bertie came to awful grief in the Grand Annual, at the on and off, when leading the field the horse swerved, Bertie set him at it again, but Wicked breasted the bank, turned right over and broke his back seeming to have fallen on and crushed his rider, Bertie soon came round and beyond a shaking was but little the worse—he rode Gameboy next racing day in the Handicap Chase second to Lord William on Goulbourn. At Lahore in November he rode a great race on Nimblefoot in the Grand Lahore Steeplechase, beating Dewing on Kate Coventry by a dozen lengths; and this was his last appearance at North-West Meetings, for shortly afterwards he left Dehra and

joined me at Jaintpore. For a couple of years he acted as Secretary and Sub-Editor of this paper, and then went to Nirgie where the bungalow was very damp and here, I fear, he contracted the malady which eventually carried him off. I never shall forget his remark when first taking him to look at my chase and flat courses. He had dismounted and was kicking up the soft soil with the toe of his boot and said "By Jove, old chap, what a lovely country to tumble about in." He rode after this occasionally for me at Sonepore and Mozufferpore and once or twice went down to Raneegunge and Assensole, winning several races both on the flat and over hurdles in brilliant style, but I do not think he had a cross country mount since going to Tirhoot. About four years ago he took charge of the Gaighat Concern in Chupra and his race-riding days virtually came to an end. Few more intrepid riders ever got into a saddle, his hands and temper with a horse were perfect, but he was simply infatuated with steeplechasing, his chief ambition being to turn every horse he could get hold of into a "lepper"; and it was a treat to see him schooling raw youngsters. Bertie Short was a genius, as a sporting writer he was without equal in this country, and he also could write well on most subjects, in fact he had the pen of a very ready writer; but he hated such work and it always took a lot of coaxing to get him to sit down to the desk. He was a good Latin, Greek, and French scholar, and had he possessed application might have risen to any height in any profession he chose to adopt; he would have made a dashing soldier and it was a great pity he ever left the Police, for as a frontier officer, or in places where pluck, dash and decision, were necessary he would have been all there. He liked the free life of the Planters and certainly worked Gaighat in a marvellous manner. Although a born Bohemian he had many loveable qualities and there are few who have come across

him who have not sincerely liked him. For the last few years he had been a martyr to gout, to which eventually he succumbed at the comparatively early age of 45. Right up to his death he was just as big a boy as when under the keen eyes of his masters at Marlborough; witness the madcap pranks he was going to play the globe-trotting boy young Morningstar scarcely a month ago. The many amusing tricks he has played bailiffs and their myrmidons would fill a big volume. Always a good cricketer and billiard player, just as in riding, the loss of his hand affected him but little, he invented a ring which he slipped over the handle of the bat and seldom was put out without scoring double figures; with the cue his hook and an Indian rubber ring he could beat most amateurs, and he would have been a bold man who would have offered him points. A good all round sportsman has gone from amongst us, and one and all who know him have heard of his death with sincere regret. *R. I. P.*"

Even still more appalling was the news of the death of Mr. W. F. McDonell, C. S., V.C. The *Indian Planters' Gazette* said:—"The hand of death has latterly been very busy among the ranks of distinguished old Indians, but his merciless scythe has not mown down a braver or better than the gallant civilian whose obituary notice it is our sad task to write. By none will the death of Mr. William Fraser McDonell be more acutely felt than the older members of the Behar planting community for in him they lose a staunch and valued friend, and it was among them he spent the majority of his Mofussil career. Arriving in India during Jaunary 1850, he was posted to Chupra in March and then transferred for a short time to Motihari, where he remained till the Mutiny broke out. From the very commencement 'Little Mac' endeared himself to all who came in contact with him; plucky, though unassuming, full of life and fun, he was just the man for a planting district; one

of Nature's true gentlemen there was none of the insufferable conceit about him which is so unfortunately conspicuous amongst occasional specimens of the present day Civilian. At Mozufferpore, Sonapore, and Motihari he was often seen in racing colours, and many a tight finish has he fought out against Ulick Browne, Fred. H. B. Simpson Peacock, and other good G.R.'s of those days. As a pig-sticker he was all there, though his extreme reticence in talking of his own exploits with gun and spear makes it less possible to obtain reliable data of them, than would be the case with a less modest sportsman. How few are now left who used in the fifties and the early sixties to foregather under the shade of Sonapore's favourite mangoe topes. Gone are dear old Bicrom, Albert Mangles, Theo. Metcalfe, C. T. Buckland, William Tayler, "Monty" Turnbull and many others, and now poor Fraser McDonell; while there are still living in England Ulick Browne, Dick Richardson, Teddy Drummond, Judex Simmy, F. A. Vincent, R. P. Jenkins, Charley Palmer, and Wallace, who could tell us how the stud and country-breds then held their own on the Indian Turf, till Mr. Hallen ruined the breed, and Australians came and wiped them out. Of planters of those days we have now only one left, that fine old veteran Mr. Minden James Wilson of Mozufferpore who can recall the day when Fraser McDonell first took his seat on the Magisterial bench. When the mutiny broke out Fraser McDonell volunteered to join the ill-starred party which started from Dinapore to relieve Arrah, and there he nobly won that coveted distinction which, with the exception of Ross Mangles, he alone of his service has, so far, earned. Thus writes Kaye of the deed of daring which entitled him to wear the cross 'for valour.'

" 'It was in no small measure owing to his representations and to his offer to act as a guide to the relieving force, for he knew the country well, that General Lloyd consented to send

the European detachment into Shahabad. Always in the front, always in the thick of the battle, he did excellent service as I have said before, on the march. Many a mutineer sank beneath the fire of his rifle. He was beside Dunbar when he fell; and was sprinkled with the life-blood of the luckless leader. Wounded himself, he still fought on gallantly during the retreat, and reached the nullah with a stiffened limb, but with no abatement of vigorous courage. There, having done his best to assist others more helpless than himself, he entered the last of the boats; and deliverance seemed to be at hand. But the insurgents had taken away the oars and had lashed the rudder, and though the breeze was favourable for the escape of our people, the current carried the boat back to the river bank and fast and furious came the shower of musket-balls from the pieces of the enemy. The boats were the large covered boats—the floating haystacks—of the country, which afforded excellent shelter to those who huddled together beneath the clumsy thatch. There were thirty-five European soldiers on board the boat, and McDonell, seeing the difficulty and danger which the impossibility of steering the vessel brought upon them, called upon the men to cut the lashings of the rudder. But no man stirred. So McDonell went out from the shelter, and climbing on to the roof of the boat perched himself on the rudder and cut the lashings amidst a very storm of bullets from the contiguous bank. It was truly a providential deliverance that he escaped instant death. Coolly and steadily he went about his perilous work, and though some balls passed through his hat, not one did him any harm. Thus the rudder was loosened, the boat answered to the helm, and by McDonell's gallant act the crew were saved from certain destruction.'

“No soldier ever won the V. C. more valiantly or deserved it better. When the struggle against the cowardly mutineers was at its height, Fraser McDonell was civil officer with the

force that was sent in pursuit of the fugitive leader Koer Sing and which cleared them out of the Behea jungles. He was often under fire and his favourite weapon was, as was natural enough, a hog spear. In 1860 he took three years' furlough to England and on his return was posted to the Nuddea District and afterwards acted as Commissioner of Bhagalpore where he remained till 1870, changing from the Revenue to the Judicial branch during that period. He then returned to Behar and for four years acted as Judge of Patna, where he kept open house in right royal style. In 1874 he was promoted to the High Court and remained there till 1886, when he resigned the service. Among the native community he was fully as much respected and liked as he was by Europeans, his doors were always open to them, and many a bitter family feud was settled by his sound and kindly counsel. He ever dissuaded Zemindars from litigation for he knew the ruin which this expensive, though seemingly fascinating form of gambling, inevitably brings upon those who indulge in it. As a judge he was most painstaking and thorough, as a Collector and Magistrate shrewd, far-seeing, and sympathetic; of his personal qualities too much good cannot be said; as a friend he was unequalled; gentle and unassuming few would guess that under that quiet exterior beat a heart bold as a lion's. A man of sterling worth, very truly does the *Calcutta Englishman* in a touching *In Memoriam* of him say:—'Not to many men is it granted to show so noble a record. To attain to the Bench of the Highest tribunal in the land after years of meritorious service is much; to wear in that honourable position the Queen's Cross 'For Valour' is much more; but to have won both with the hearty good-will of rivals and companions and without one dissentient voice is most of all.'

"While we cannot to the near and dear ones he leaves behind, say in the words of the widow of Glencoe

'Weep not for him'

yet we can but think that the universal wail of regret with which the journals of India have noticed the death of the hero of Arrah and the sympathy so honestly felt for those bereaved, will do much to assuage their intense grief. The speech made on Thursday morning by Mr. Justice Norris on taking his seat on the Bench was admirable, and the feeling way in which he alluded to the personal kindness shown him by his late respected colleague was creditable in the extreme—among other remarks his Lordship said ‘He was a fine type of a class of men, who, though occasionally they may make mistakes, have earned for themselves a great reputation, and have done wonders for the good of India. He was a prudent, painstaking man, full of chivalry. There was in reality, no smallness, no meanness in his character or disposition. He was a fast friend, and I believe he endeared himself as much to the profession as to all his colleagues. I am quite certain that his memory will remain for many years fresh and fragrant in the recollections of all those who had the honor and the privilege of his friendship.’

“By no circle of society was Mr. Fraser McDonell more deservedly beloved, respected, and trusted than by the racing community. He became a member of the Turf Club in 1866 and took an active interest in all its regulations and proceedings, he was elected one of the Stewards for 1875 and the following year, again in ’78, ’79 and ’80 and acted over and over again as Steward of our big meetings. He is one of the men who may well be said to have made India. The son of a Madras Civilian he was educated at that best of Schools, Haileybury, and well may the old place be proud of him. Few men have gone to their graves more absolutely deserving of honor than William Fraser McDonell, C. S., V. C.”

The Sonepore Stewards for 1894 were Colonel St. Paul, Captain Edwards, Messrs. Forbes, Page, Slack, Hare,

Lockhart, Hopkins, Hudson, " Bones " Wilson and Major Ridley of the Manchester, which Regiment had replaced the Queen's. The new officers were a rare good lot, and at once on their arrival gave out that they intended to patronise Sonepore and would do all in their power to add to the fun. Major Ridley was a mighty pigsticker, and the Doctor attached to the Regiment, Surgeon-Captain Osborne, better known as " Begorrah," an accomplished race rider, and excellent amateur trainer ; while in Abbot Anderson they possessed a perfect brick of a captain and their boys were all " the right sort." The entries for the races were confined almost entirely to local horses, Mr. McGeorge and Mr. Ernest Gregory being the only Calcutta, or outside, owners present. Mr. Gregory's Harbour Light had been trained at Otter by Mr. Rowland Hudson. Late rains had made the going on the course sticky, and, most unfortunately, rumours got about that the camping ground was, dangerously damp, and it was therefore scarcely to be wondered at if camps were not quite as numerous as usual, but lovelier weather, or a jollier gathering has scarcely been known. This was to be the last year of Harry Boileau's incumbency of the head bobbyship of Chupra, and he was in consequence much depressed, though to relieve his drooping spirits he had bidden as guest a fair lady globe-trotter, to whom he was most devoted, and who left saying, her dear little host was a pearl beyond price. Mr. O'Donnell as Magistrate of Patna had, much to the disgust of old Soneporeans, deprived poor old Behari Singh of the ticca of the ghats, which he had held for so many years. It was an arbitrary and unkind action, for Behari had done yeoman service to the Sonepore Stewards, as well as to the thousands of native pilgrims who yearly came to wash away their sins in the sacred river. Behari was simply invaluable to Soneporeans. There was nothing one fell short of he could not supply at the shortest notice, from an elephant to take ladies to see the fair,

down to a dhurry or chicks for one's tent. The ghats might well have been left to him for the short remaining span of his life, for he died in 1895, his end having been undoubtedly hastened by fretting over his loss. Poor old man, everyone had a kind word for him whenever he trotted down the road in his racketty old dog cart, pulled by a veritable Rosinante, or stopped to speak to his old friends and patrons. For forty-two years, ever since Frank Vincent appointed him course chowikdar on three rupees a month, he had never missed a Sonapore meeting; ever good tempered, willing and obliging, we missed him much in 1894. The old man never held up his head again after being as he considered disgraced. Peace to his ashes. But it is time though to hark back to the meeting. Messrs. Slack and Boileau were early on the scene and so carefully had they drained the camping ground that by Friday everything was high and dry and the course excellent going. The campswere fewer than usual. Chupra sent two, one managed by Mrs. Slack, wife to the popular new local Collector, and one by Mrs. Lockhart, whose jovial husband's high spirits never flag. These between them mustered some sixty hosts and guests. In the latter camp were some officers of the Highland Light Infantry and several Calcutta people. Among Harry Abbotts guest's were Lord William Beresford and his cousin, Mr. W. Holmes, who had just retired from the North-West Civil Service. Owing to the sad death of poor young Ward the Manchester Regiment had comparatively abandoned the big camp they had arranged for, although a few of them came over from Dinapore occasionally, and with them was a small contingent of Bankipore people. Mr. Arthur Forbes could not bid the number of guests welcome he has hitherto been in the habit of entertaining so sumptuously, as he had to make arrangements for the wedding of a fair niece and also to entertain the Lieutenant-Governor during his visit to Patna. Bankipore for these reasons was only represented by one camp, but grandly was old time hos-

pitality kept up at it, for all the forty-five who put their feet under the dinner table were guests of the generous host Mr. C. A. Mills, and right royally were they entertained by him, and Mrs. Flood-Murray, who kindly acted as hostess. Last, but not least, was the big Mozufferpore Camp, ably presided over by Mrs. Hall, who had to cater for over thirty friends; but to this kind-hearted lady an undertaking which would appal most is a pleasant task, for her gift of organising is so great that everything under her management seems to work without the least hitch, and the universally expressed gratitude of those in whose interests she laboured proved their grateful appreciation of her efforts to please. Mr. Hare, Collector of Mozufferpore, had a small camp; Chumparun was only represented by Jimmy McLeod, who was putting up in Mr. Hall's camp. Dr. T. McDonald, a worthy scion of a family well-known in Behar was in medical charge of the Fair in a camp of his own, but, thanks to the now excellent sanitary arrangements, his duties were light and chiefly consisted in supplying a very soothing elixir in the shape of a most excellent brand of whisky to passers by afflicted with that most trying of complaints, an intermittent dry throat, which was very prevalent at Sonapore owing probably to the dampness of the soil on which the tents were pitched.

The first day's racing being on Monday, lotteries were held on Saturday night, but as very few of the sporting element had arrived, the Honorary Secretary closed his books after filling a couple of papers and everyone cleared home to supper. Sunday was chiefly passed in completing arrangements, and the course being still a bit greasy, the races usually held in the morning were put off to Monday afternoon. Three bookmakers were present—Jenkinson, Hardinge and Lee. Events opened with *The Planters' Gazette* Purse, which Mr. Rowland easily appropriated with that good looking pony Sir Hugh, bred by Jimmy McLeod; Chester second; Mr. McGeorge

getting third place on game little Singar, carrying the crusher of 12st. Three turned out for the Hutwa Cup. Profit was installed a hot favorite and won in a common canter, though not looking quite ripe; Wabba led them a rare dance to the corner, good old Blaze made a game effort at the finish. For the Bettiah Cup only two declared to start, and as both these were the property of Mr. Charley Hay-Webb, he declared to walk over with Bad Spec. Then came an exciting race for Messrs. Jessop & Co.'s Cup, won by Mr. N. C. Sen's English mare Marechale Niel, Singar second but as Mr. McGeorge forgot to weigh in his pony was disqualified and second place awarded to Blemish. Chester and Greyling ran neck and neck from start to finish for Messrs. Moran's Cup, Chester just getting home. His Highness the Maharajah's capital band played during the races, and a great improvement was made by erecting saddling sheds in the enclosure, so there was far less delay than of old between each race. Mrs. Hall and several other ladies kindly assisted Mr. Boileau in seeing to the floor and decorating the walls, the result being most successful and the going all that could be desired; a capital evening's dancing was followed by a supper served in Messrs. Framjee's best style, and the consumption of Pommery Greeno proved that the brand still retains its deservedly high reputation. Messrs. Lobo's band played excellently, and it was the very small hours of the morning ere the ladies gave in. It is always remarkable how great a change comes over the spirits of Sonepore sportsmen attending the second night's lotteries; instead of the Secretary having to coax those present to toss, he has always enough to do to take down the names, and the papers filled quickly enough on Tuesday; Lord William arrived by the 10-30 train and came in towards the end, he began by taking five tickets in his own name and was lucky enough to draw a hot favorite. Nothing would go down for the Durbangah Cup but Harbour

Light, and Camaltha was served up a very hot favorite for the Doomraon Cup, while Petroleum, Singar and Chester fluctuated as favorites in the lotteries on the Merchants' Cup, the reason for the two latter being fancied was, that it leaked out professionals were to steer them ; at the final lottery Singar held pride of place. For the Polo Scurry Norman and Lobster were elected as the pick. The racing was decidedly good, though the favorites got home in every event. Messrs. Framjee's pretty cup was a W. O. for Mr. Boileau's Pirate Queen and everybody was pleased to see the obliging Clerk of the Course carry off a souvenir of the last meeting he could be present at as D.S.P. of the district. Harbour Light squandered the field for the Durbangah Cup, the popular and generous donor arriving just too late to see it run for. Everyone was glad to see His Highness for he is always ready to assist the Behar meetings with cups and the loan of his band. The cup of another good friend to Sonepore, the Maharajah of Doomraon, was won easily by Mr. Rowland's Camaltha, piloted by that strong horseman Trahan. The Merchants' Cup was won by Messrs. Darley and Daunt's Singar, who had Pughe up ; Petroleum, much fancied by his stable followers, finished nowhere. Greyling, a good little pony just too small for Behar, ran very gamely ; Old Referee won the cup presented by Messrs. Oldemeyer and Hadenfeldt and his owner pledged himself to stand by Beck's Pelsener for the rest of his existence. The Polo Scurry was appropriated by Jimmy's Norman, a very stout handsome little Arab. Altogether the day's racing was good, for although some of the horse events were not as exciting as could be wished, the pony racing was above the average and events very evenly distributed. Very neat programmes of each day's racing, printed by Messrs. Thacker, Spink and Co., were very welcome to the ladies. On Wednesday afternoon that stalwart young planter Mr. Johnny Webb got up a bumblepuppy which gave no end of fun,

On Thursday night the lotteries eclipsed even those now held in the C.T.C. rooms. In several the animals brought the total up to thirteen hundred rupees and over, though the tickets were only Rs. 500. This was real jam for the ticket takers who were as keen as mustard. An enthusiastic youth from Calcutta bought Harbour Light's chance for Rs. 380 and did not score by the transaction; backing a faint-hearted one at five to one on is scarcely a sound commercial transaction; when tired of frattling the dice, punters trooped over to Bob Lockhart's camp for supper, and most of them remained there till it was time to dress for the morning's racing; but suddenly someone looking round missed Abbot-Anderson and a party went in search of that festive youth; they found him in his tent undressed, save for his shirt, and he had evidently fallen asleep kneeling by his bed, and with only his head on the pillow; promptly was a sketch taken of him, and sent to the *I.P.G.* to which Harry added the following squib.

LOST BUT FOUND.

Our hearts were so sad for that good looking lad,
When at half past four we missed him,
For each demoiselle rare, who had come to the fair,
Ere he left would have liked to have kissed him.

In search of him bent, we invaded his tent
And there on his knees we found him.
But we dared not shout, for he looked so devout
With his night shirt draped around him;

We were filled with much joy that the bald-headed boy
Was pious enough to be praying,
And our peepers quite glistened with tears as we listened
To what our Adonis was saying.

But 'twas scarcely a prayer he was breathing there,
As he knelt in such negligent ease
And our heart strings fluttered as thickly he muttered,
"A little more champagne please."

Now his wash bowl was near, and we raised a wild cheer,
For the water was temptingly dirty,
So we doused him and ran, for a carrotty man
When ducked is inclined to be shirty.

How we chortled with laughter, when two hours after
As fresh as a daisy we saw him,
And he whispered, "Dear boys, how this Meet one enjoys,
When another day's drinking's before him."

Rattling good racing on Friday resulted in every favorite save Camaltha being bowled over. It was a great compliment to Captain Gunn, who kindly officiated as Handicapper, that not a single owner declined to run; the two bookies present had a good day. Messrs. Kellner's Cup was won by Mr. L. James, Chester, a dead outsider who sold for ten and twenty rupees in two lotteries in which Marechale Neil and Singar sold for over three hundred each. Mr. James did well with this pony which Mr. Abbott bought for him, having won close on three thousand rupees on an eight hundred purchase. Profit stuck to Harbour Light and fairly wore him down in the mile and a half Civilians' Cup; at the corner the shifty one's tail went round and he distinctly cut it; Eka was beaten off. Mr. Gye did well with Profit and it was some return for the hard luck he had when Hopetoun broke his leg at the Tollygunge meeting. Camaltha won the Trades' Cup easily, Trahan having his work cut out to hold her back throughout the race. Greenstone, another outsider, beat the heavily backed Hyacinth in Messrs. Thomas' Cup and Messrs. Bourne and Shepherd's pretty album, a race for ponies bought at the fair, was won by a pony called No Go six starting. *No go* was afterwards disqualified and the race awarded to Captain Bertram's Miss Angell.

Each evening in the gloaming one or other of the camps gave an at home and all gathered in the prettily furnished Shamianas to listen to songs, glees, and airs till the time came to dress for dinner, Mrs. Mackale's voice being, specially

admired; her enunciation was so perfect that even in a shamiana every word was distinctly audible. The last night's ball was as enjoyable as its predecessors and the usual pretty speeches were made at supper. At a meeting of the Stewards held on Saturday it was unanimously agreed that the ball-room should be enlarged, a smoking-room built, the verandah railings facing the race course be removed, and steps be made like those at the Calcutta monsoon race stand; to serve to give more room in the ladies' part of the stand, and with a light awning over them be useful to lounge on in the intervals between dancing. The polo ground was also to be raised, ball-room furniture bought and several other improvements made. The show of horses and ponies at the fair was so poor that the judges, Messrs. Gunn, Abbott and Slack, advised Government that as the district is essentially not a horse-breeding one they might as well drop giving prizes.

CHAPTER XLI.

YEAR 1895.

The cold weather of '95-'96 was the last racing season that Bill Beresford was to spend in India, but the Calcutta sportsmen gave him a splendid farewell dinner at which his school fellow and chum Charley Moore said all the pretty things necessary about one who had for twenty years been a staunch promoter of sport. The ladies of the Calcutta hunt also dined him well, and he himself gave a big spread at the Bengal Club to a number of friends, at which some forty sat down. It was a most representative dinner as members of almost every profession were present. Amongst the guests were; Sir John Lambert, General Collen, Mr. Willie Holmes, Mr. Hensman (*The Pioneer*), Sir Thoby Prinsep, Mr. J.O'B. Saunders (*The Englishman*), Mr. H. E. Abbott (*The Indian Planters' Gazette*), Mr. F. W. Baker, I.C.S., Captains Grimston and Pollen, Mr. D. Yule, Mr. D. King, Colonel J. Hunt, The Hon'ble

W. Macpherson, Mr. H. R. McInnes, Colonel Algernon Durand, Mr. Dangerfield and many more. The health of the noble host was drunk midst a storm of applause as was also that of Mr. F. W. Baker, the founder of the Civil Service Cup at Lucknow, with musical honours, and "Harry Abbott's" health was also drunk as "the proprietor of the most independent sporting paper in India." Mr. McInnes was in great form and made a most soul-stirring speech. The party broke up at a somewhat early hour as many of the guests were due at the dance at the Saturday Club given by the Captain and Officers of H. M. S. *Marathon*.

Quite up to the average were the Sonepore Entries for 1895 and prospects of camps. Was there ever a visitor who when he had been once to Sonepore did not vow by all he held dear never to miss it again, if possible, as long as the fates kept him in India. Other mofussil race meetings there may be which now-a-days eclipse it as far as racing goes, but nowhere else does one enjoy such a unique week's outing, there is an utter absence of stiffness or cliquism, and in the most friendly intercourse the hours and days pass away, alas, far too rapidly. 1895 has seldom been beaten, for everything went with a *verve* and go which never slacked from first to last. Although Bob Lockhart's usually big camp was missing this year, yet it was pleasant to once more see Jimmy McLeod's tents in the old corner near the ball room, and Mrs. Apperley presiding as in days of yore. Mozufferpore showed up strongly, both Mr. Hare, the Collector, and Mr. Hamilton, the Judge, having camps. Mrs. Hall managed the latter and very pretty was her neat little *shamianah* and right royally were the creature comforts attended to. Our worthy Commissioner, Arthur Forbes, had a large number of guests, mostly ladies, he explained that many of the sterner sex had disappointed him at the last moment, but some of the sceptics hinted they had their doubts as to the credibility of this statement, when they found the sly dog seated

like Haroun Al Rashid midst a bevy of sweet girls, whose pretty faces and winsome graces St. Anthony would never have been able to withstand. Mr. and Mrs. Inglis were of this camp; they had brought over their son hoping there would be a baby show, but unfortunately the Secretany declined to get one up, on the ground that the mothers of unplaced sucklings would certainly murder the judge, and that no one would dare to accept such a responsible and dangerous post. Several anecdotes are known to his friends of the capacity of Tingles when a schoolboy for tart scoffing, but the worthy beak could not possibly have been in the same handicap with his offspring. Decoyed one day to the Chupra camp this heroic child finished a dozen apples (no cores wasted), a pound of rich plum cake, and then, as a light finish off, he filled himself up with a plateful of pears in syrup; he held it all magnificently and save that his eyes and lower chest shewed a slight tendency to protrude, and his skin tightened a bit, there was nothing to warrant the supposition that he had done anything of an extraordinary nature. He was somewhat silent and contemplative till tea time, when he seemed to wake up and then took a lively interest in the sugar bowl and scotch shortbread; he is not a delicate child by any means, and in years to come should make an excellent alderman. The Manchester Regiment had a well filled camp, but that quiet officer Captain Abbot-Anderson's absence was much regretted at third suppers, though Messrs. Souter and Vaughan did their best to supply his place. Mr. Mills played sole host to the biggest camp of the lot, and at least two score must have sat down to every meal, the supper being only cleared to bring on the *chota hazaree*. Among his guests were those two *bon vivants* Messrs. Harry Stevens and Henry Neville Harris, both looking marvellously well and young. Mr. Slack's camp was a thoroughly jolly one, though her many friends regretted much the absence of Mrs. Slack, but right well did Mrs. Llewhellin do the honors,

and fast and furious was the fun. Camped all by himself was that cannie Hieland Chiel Doctor Tom McDonald, but he always had a sup o'gude whisky to offer the thirsty passer by. The ball room floor was excellent going, and the decorations, thanks to Mrs. Llewhellin, and Mr. Slack, were very tasteful. Most unfortunately that energetic policeman, Mr. Alec Knyvett, was seized with an acute attack of dysentery after the first day and had to take to his bed, so the Stewards lost his valuable services in superintending the suppers and course. The lotteries flagged somewhat this year, as the fields were not only small but most of the events dead certainties, the only upset the first day being when Harry Abbott's new purchase Hurricane showed a clean pair of heels to Smallfry in the Bettiah Cup. Ihumata and Stewpan quite outclassed their respective opponents, and won their races with consummate ease. Polo was in full swing, and so was lawn tennis throughout the meeting, and there was a large gathering on Monday in the supper room to discuss the much-vexed question of whether 13-2 or 13-3 should be the polo pony height for the District. Jimmy McLeod was the chief supporter of the former and Charley Miller of the latter class, but the 13-2's had the victory by an overwhelming majority. On Sunday a quiet day was spent, that popular Padre, the Rev. Mr. Sealey, kindly ran down from Arrah and held divine service, which was largely attended. Monday's racing was better than Friday's and the lotteries on Saturday night much brisker, though what might have proved a good race for the Doomraon Cup was marred by Hurricane's slipping up on a footpath and in recovering himself going off the course. Hard luck on horse, rider and owner. He was found to have strained his shoulder so severely that he was unable to start again at the meeting. A Gymkhana on Tuesday was a great success, the jumping competition procuring a lot of entries, Mrs. Barrow on her father's handsome

brown, The Abbot, winning in capital style. Mrs. Ryves was on a very big jumper, but he ran down most of his fences, whereas The Abbot never put toe on twig. Seven entered for the men's jumping competition and again a horse of Harry Abbott's called Jehoshaphat, cleverly steered by Mr. Milton, won; Hamish Walker second and poor Sammy Ayres third. Hamish Walker appropriated the prize for jumping ponies, and this enthusiastic young sportsman heartily deserved credit for the excellent and steady schooling he gave his fine string of hunters. All jumped temperately and cleverly and none of their mouths were spoilt; Mr. Godbold gained second honors. Then came the Arithmetic Stakes which the favorite won in a walk. Few sweet girl graduates could beat Miss Green in quick calculation, and this clever young lady has won some four prizes in events of this sort. Mr. Ayres rode in great form, Miss Bell was second. The Ladies' Trotting race was a bit spoilt by most of the horses breaking. Mrs. Barrow rode very quietly and won by a street, but it was nearly dark as she passed the winning post so the rest of the events were postponed to the next day. Mr. Ayres nominated by his sister Mrs. Llewellyn was the winner of the Cheeroot and Umbrella Race, and then came the event of the meeting, a side saddle race for callow young gallants to be dressed in female costume on the course by ladies, ride round a stick at the distance post and home again; the Tartlets were most carefully arrayed by their fair nominators in those garments so jealously kept to themselves by the daughters of Eve. Miss Springfield when dressed by Mrs. Ruxton did not give the idea of being quite the class of Lady Clara Vere de Vere, while her complexion certainly warranted the assumption that she laced tightly and suffered from indigestion, moreover she leered in a most unladylike way at the gentlemen onlookers, and the way she leapt into the saddle without any assistance, seemed to point to her having been brought up to the circus business,

but if this young lady was not a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, those two lumps of cuddle Miss McVean and Miss Godbold were angels indeed, loud rang the plaudits as first one and then the other was deftly arrayed in the dainty fripperies and irreproachable head gear provided by Miss Bertram and Miss Ridley. On seeing Miss Godbold, Harry Abbott who was judging, clapped his hand where he fancied his heart ought to lie and burst forth with

She looks so lovely as she sways
The reins with dainty finger tips
That I would give all worldly bliss
And all my future hopes, for this
To waste my whole life in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips

and then when he gazed on the delicate looking Miss McVean, whose figure might have vied with that of the Venus of Milo, he spouted

Sweet charmer who'd not wish to be
On desert isle alone with thee
Upon that isle I would remain
Till Doomsday with you fair McVean.

Miss Frances McNamara when fully equipped by Mrs. Barrow was seen to have one of those creamy pink and white complexions so common among the pretty maidens of Kent; her's was a cheek as tempting to bite as a golden pippin, while the suspicion of down lightly lining her upper lip added to the fascination of her decidedly ladylike appearance. Miss Russel was dressed by Mrs. Lyon; above a pure and exceptionally modest face was placed a wig which Pymm himself could not have beaten; it was made of tow and painted yaller; this otherwise demure damsel had golden hair dangling down her back with a vengeance, and had a Curate met her in a country lane he'd have had a fit right away.

There was a young lady named Russel
Who'd everything on but a bussel
When they laughed at her hair
She muttered, Take care
Or I'll give you a taste of my mussel.

Great was the excitement and never did Amazons at the charge ride harder than these ducksey wuck sies, though the display of underclothing was a bit embarrassing, at least the judge said so, but Miss McNamara came in a length in front of the red as a beetroot Miss Springfield, who seemed to be using her flail most vigorously. The members of Mr. Slack's camp went back proud as peacocks, for they had won every event.

The tennis tournament ended by Miss Lyall and Mr. Ryves beating Miss Bell and Mr. Elliot, the scores being 11—9; 6—4.

The heat was too appalling for words during the last two days, and it must have been most trying for the lady players. Each off night while the men were at the lotteries the ladies of one or other camp held at homes, and round bonfires, music, and singing served to make the evenings pass pleasantly. Everyone was delighted to see Mrs. Forbes looking so well and strong after her trip to England and able to preside over her popular husband's camp with her usual sweet graciousness.

The native portion of the fair was fully double in numbers to what it was the previous year, and the elephants, camels, horses, and cattle in proportion. The show of upcountry buffalo cows and Patna bred cows was decidedly superior to that of previous years, and Messrs. Gunn, Abbott, and Wilson, who acted as judges, found several very fine beasts, all of which were at once snapped up by Calcutta *goallars* at remunerative prices to the breeders or dealers. Year by year the quality and quantity of horses shown at this time-honored fair

gets worse and worse ; but ponies were plentiful though the majority lacked quality. A new line was opened out this year owing to the undoubted satisfaction given by the Arab Polp ponies selected and sent to Behar by that best of judges and good fellows, Veterinary Colonel Joe Anderson of Bombay, several local dealers were induced to import Arabs, and several very decent ponies found ready sale at an average of Rs. 500. The sanitary arrangements were excellent this year, and among the visitors was Surgeon Major Dyson, who seemed very pleased with the care taken by the local authorities in this respect. The polo ground was in capital order and intense interest was shewn in the different contests. Mr. Mill's' camp played brilliantly but were beaten in the final by the Mozufferpore team. As usual each camp gave a nightly at home, which served to pass the evenings away pleasantly, and introduced us to several new singers. Mr. Frank Lyall had a magnificent voice for a crow chorus, but we missed this year the dulcet notes of that famed vocalist Mr. Jim Wilson, who is the only localite who can approach Mr. Paul Valetta in sweet strains and love songs.

Captain Gunn very kindly handicapped for the third day and was most impartial in his allotments of weights, but as he pointed out it was impossible with the conditions binding him to eleven-seven as top weight to level Stewpan and Ihumata to the rest, and the results of the third day showed the correctness of his judgment. However, the lotteries filled briskly and the racing was the best seen at the meeting.

The third day's racing was somewhat spoilt by both Stewpan and Ihumata being such dead certainties, but Mr. Mills' Cup produced a big field and a pretty race, Jimmy's game little Arab, Norman, having his work cut out to beat Bob Lockhart's country-bred, Maud, a daughter of Caractus and almost a hand smaller than the winner ; she was

virtually untrained. Suklaun won the Charger Race, beating the favorite, Greenstone, easily. A very jolly ball in the evening was followed by an equally enjoyable supper, at which the usual pretty speeches were made, Mr. Forbes proposing the health of his old friend the Honorary Secretary. That rotund gentleman in returning thanks asked those present to drink a bumper to the Stewards and particularly to Mr. C. A. Mills, one of the chief supporters of the meeting. He also called attention to the proposed improvements, asking everyone to subscribe their mite, and saying that while he did not expect the youngsters to give excessive sums, yet he hoped they would one and all send him the modest amount of Rs. 5 each. This was warmly responded to, and close on Rs. 8,000 raised. Harry Abbott then proposed the health of Jimmy McLeod, which was drunk with full Highland honors, after which that eloquent orator Bob Lockhart in his own sweet way proposed the health of the ladies; three callow youths tried to respond, but were alas! unequal to the occasion, so up got the ladies and trooped out to continue dancing till the small hours of the morning, little knowing the dangers the Chupra Collector was facing on their account.

But now I have a thrilling tale to tell
Of dangers braved and victory won as well
By our Collector, the heroic Slack,
Who dared a mighty mastodon attack;
Facing the monster proudly did he stand
Only a bobby's baton in his hand,
And with the aid of plantains on a stick
Captured the foe and neatly won the trick.

Just after the last shouts of "here's to you Jamie" had died away, and those who had not sat down to first supper were making themselves quite at home with Pommery and turkey, a

chit was handed to Mr. Slack by a constable, and on perusal it showed that a MUST elephant was loose and moving up towards the camp. The writer asked that a file of the brave Manchester Tommies might be sent down to shoot the "*huge earth shaking beast*," as Lord Macaulay so aptly termed the awkward pachyderm. Then did that mighty pigsticker Willie Dixon of Mullyah and Harry Abbott volunteer to accompany the Collector to death or glory. So saying nothing to those present, in case of creating a panic among the ladies, they left the supper room and drove to the tents, meanwhile sending across to the Manchester for arms and men. In the fastest time on record they changed their dress suits for garments more suitable for skirmishing, and on arrival at the regimental tent found that that brave officer Captain Maxwell, known in the Mess as *The Invincible*, on account of his prowess when at school as a pudding swallower, had already started with a dozen valiant sons of Mars for the scene of action, so lifting into the carriage another fire-eater, the noble Vaughan, they drove off, but first posted the ladies' pet, the incomparable Mr. Stevenson, with six Tommies armed with loaded rifles, to guard the road leading to the camp, and instructed him should the enemy come that way, to fire all his ammunition and then bolt and seek refuge under cover of the big Guzerati buffalo cows, which were alongside the road. Away the warriors drove to the elephant camp, whence the sound of mighty trumpetings told that the monster was all there and bent on defying the English Government and its sworn defenders. Then did hearts beat high with martial ardour, and clasping each other's hands the heroes swore to stand by one another, and not bolt if they possibly could help it. Scarcely had they alighted from the carriage when they came upon Captain Maxwell and his company. That astute officer, evidently being of a frugal mind and not wishing to sport good togs in the event of his being caught and crushed out of shape by the enemy, had arrayed

himself lightly in one of the holiest and dingiest great coats he could find, it evidently belonging to a taller man than himself, for it came well down to his heels and disguised the fact that he had not even gone to the extravagance of wearing socks. Thus do truly great men show their infinity of resource in emergencies by studying the minutest of petty details. Boldly did the Collector, having boned a baton from a constable, lead the way calling on those present in the name of the Queen Empress to exterminate the vile disturber of the peace the instant he gave the order, Willie Dixon, having more foot than the rest, soon forged to the front till near the confines of a huge crowd the elephant was seen standing with elevated trunk and shaking ears under a big mango tree. After a wary reconnoitre and posting the Tommies on an elevated position, whence they could fire safely over the heads of the crowd the four Europeans walked to within a few yards of the brute, and a very fine elephant he was, but as the planters, who know something about elephants, pointed out he was certainly not *must*, though undoubtedly angry, so thinking it a great pity to sacrifice such a noble beast, Mr. Slack offered a reward of Rs. 50 to any mahout who would secure him. A few judiciously put enquiries elicited the fact that he had been sold the previous day to a new master, his old mahout having been discharged had cleared out and a new man placed in charge, who next morning took him down to the river for his bath, and here he got into a difference of opinion with another elephant of about the same height, but in much better condition; naturally weight told and he got a jolly good hiding, after which he seemed to have lost confidence in his new mahout, and so trotted back to the tope where he was first tied and roamed about evidently in search of his old guide, but as the day went through he got vexed at his failure, still more angry at the crowds who followed him at a respectful distance, and the few strange mahouts who in a half-hearted way tried in

the hope of *baksish* to capture him. While the mahouts tried to lasso him, the Europeans in front endeavoured to distract his attention from the game that was being played behind, but at last he woke up to what was going on and letting out, he caught one too venturesome Aryan lifting him full ten feet to the rear, but no bones were broken and he picked himself up all right, but now the elephant's monkey was really up and before you could say sword he was in motion.

Lifting his trunk high in the air and trumpeting louder than any twenty bulls of Basan could be capable of, he came down at the charge. Great Scot how the heroes did scoot!! Vaughan sought shelter up a mango tree, Little Slack fell into a deep muck hole, but still brandishing his peeler's baton he yelled out to the mahouts to be quick and capture the brute in the Queen's name, but neither he nor anyone else were fated to be crushed to death, for just in front of the malodorous resting place of the Collector, Willie Dixon tripped over a mango tree root and thinking his last moment had come, with a brilliancy of resource, which did him infinite credit under such trying circumstances, he held up both his feet. It was enough—yea more than enough. One glance and his pursuer took them for the shadow of the enemy who had given him such a drubbing in the morning and with a bellow of terror he turned and fled, till he pulled up and stood trembling with funk under a small mango tree. The Native Inspector pulled out the Collector and rubbed him down as clean as he could, cursing the elephant's female relatives volubly as a solace to his master's wounded dignity. Willie Dixon got on to his pedal extremities once more, the Manchester officers reformed their men, Harry crept out from a clump of bamboos and all pretended they'd not been in the least bit of a funk and sternly repudiated any hint that they had bolted from the battlefield. But they thanked Willie heartily for saving their lives and asked him to have his boots photoed, so that they might never forget

how useful they had been in the hour of need, but somehow he did not seem to rise to this, a consultation was then held as to whether they were not now justified in shooting, but on examining the bullets all came to the conclusion that as it would take about a thousand to kill the brute, they would only add to his rage by trying to pot at him with such apologies for Beecham's pills.

Was there ever a corner of the world where the gentle loafer is not to be found? Sonapore even is not without him, and at this critical moment a voice was heard from behind a bamboo tope, with an accent unmistakeably that of White-chapel and a miserably clad filthy looking individual emerged from the shade "Good h'evening gents," he observed taking off the remnants of a billy cock. "Hi don't know much of these ere Hingin helerfunts, but I've bin hin H'africa were hi was wallet to Mister Gorden Commin, hand 'igh hold times we'ad there, Lord ! 'e was a shooter—such guns and bullets, not like these ere Manchester men's peashooters ; crikey vere 'e it ha helephunt, vy the beast blowed hup hat vunce, and hall yer 'ad to do was to go and pick hup your chorp or stake, ready grilled an 'ot from the 'eat of the powder. But the H'africuns, them the boys. V'en they goes hout 'untin' they haint got no guns, bless you, not them ; they just as ha' 'andful of sand in their modesty clorths, hand a bow and harrers in their 'ands, hup they goes to the helefunt and chucks the sand in is hies, till the pore brute 'olds hup his trunk, hopens 'is mouth and 'ollers in hagony ; then hin they shoots the harrers, not in a crowd but vun by vun consecketive-ly, heach hafter the hother till the helerfunt drops dead huppon the plain hand then they dewours the wictim of their hartifice." While being treated to this discourse Mr. Slack was cogitating deeply and at last in an impressive voice he burst forth "Gentlemen and gallant officers of the Manchester Regiment, however efficacious the custom of elephant catching as related

by this worthy man may be in Africa, where the pachyderm is much inferior in size to the magnificent specimen we have to either place once more in durance vile, or destroy; yet it will scarcely commend itself to you as practicable in this case; but I have an inspiration. You must all have seen the admirable picture, drawn by that inimitable artist George Cruickshank, of the donkey race on Margate Sands, in which all the riders had huge flails in their hands with which they were heartily belabouring their patient mokes, whereas one gentle coster, cuter than the rest, had tied a bundle of carrots on to the end of his stick and holding the tempting vegetables in front of his donkey's nose cantered in an easy winner, thus illustrating successfully the superiority of kindness over brute force. If such a thing as a bunch of ripe plantains could be procured and tied on to a long bamboo, I will gladly face the infuriated monster, and while thus tempting him his attention will be distracted from what is taking place behind him; the mahouts can then creep up, entangle his legs with their chains and we shall have him safe."

Shahbash said the head native constable and the loafer saying: he knew where a green-grocer's shop was, ran off soon to reappear with a lovely bunch of golden bananas, luscious enough to coax the most sulky of elephants. In vain did we implore the heroic little Civilian not to endanger his valuable life, pointing out that he ought to think of his family at home, and, moreover, that he should reflect how short-handed the Civil Service was of able men, but he heeded not, and handing the peeler's baton to Captain Maxwell, who said he would keep it in memory of one of the bravest instances of chivalry he had ever witnessed, Mr. Slack declared his stern determination to capture the mastodon or die in the attempt. Solemnly shaking hands with him in case they might never see him in life again, the rest marched after him and right up to the elephant he strode, greeting him with friendly words, while Willie Dixon

murmured "Mile, mile," which means "kneel." Under the mango tree, with his wicked little eyes blinking, stood the huge brute and for a moment it looked as if he was going to repeat his charge and annihilate the intrepid leader, but slowly Slack shoved forward his delicate offering, till a soft smile could be distinctly seen roaming over the monster's countenance; at first he somewhat suspiciously put out his trunk, and took a pull, breaking off only a couple of plantains, but one taste was enough; a second lug took the entire bunch, and into his enormous cavity it was soon securely tucked. Meanwhile two plucky mahouts, who had crept close up to him unnoticed, quickly enchained his back legs. Then rose in the midnight air a wild shout of *Collector Sahib ke jai* and everyone knew the excitement was all over and the disturber of the night's rest safely shackled. Cheering uproariously soldiers and planters shouldered the hero of the hour and, in spite of his vigorous resistance, bore Mr. Slack back in triumph to the carriage. Full speed they tore along the road, thirsty warriors indeed, but on arrival at the spot where they had left Mr. Stevenson and his Tommies they missed the former and were told he had gone to re-assure a nervous gentleman that all danger was over. On arrival at the camp Stevenson was found sampling a tin of Oxford sausages, and an empty beer bottle showed that he approved most heartily of Pilsener. Down the warriors flopped into chairs and Harry suddenly recollecting he had a dozen of Messrs. Deutz and Gilderman's Goldlack champagne, which had been thoughtfully presented to him by that enterprising firm Messrs. Cutler Palmer and Co., in case he felt overcome with hard work, it was fished out of his tent and they were soon in the very zenith of enjoyment, pronouncing the brand most excellent and the donors jolly good fellows. Loud rang the huzzahs as they drank with all honours the health of the saviour of the Camp and what a supper they made; it was the third for some, but soon the ambrosial god

of day lifted his golden head over the horizon, and with a view of getting the cobwebs out of their eyes, horses were ordered and out they sallied jackal dumping with short sticks, a sport not as difficult as might be thought, for by the end of the meeting Sonepore jackals are fat as pigs and cannot go far. Back to a sumptuous breakfast, and then alas! the parting always sad at this jolliest of gatherings; and by two o'clock only a few melancholy tents remained to show where once had stood the camp of 1895. But who stumped up for the plantains? Slack did not, nor did the Tommies, the loafer would have scorned such an action and if asked would have exclaimed *a la* poor Bertie Short

"Base is the slave who pays."

During the meeting and after it, the hat was sent round for the proposed improvements and the response was both prompt and generous. Over eight thousand rupees were collected, and Mr. Mills worked throughout the hot weather indefatigably to finish the work in time for this year's meeting, the result being most satisfactory; he was ably aided by Mr. Longmuir of the B. and N. W. Railway, who lives on the spot, and most kindly gave a lot of his spare time and experience to push things on, also taking charge of the race course. Entries were bigger than for many years. Another sad death of a local planter occurred in April; just as the yearly Gymkhana was in full swing, died poor Sammy Ayres, of whom the *I.P.G.* thus wrote:—

"It is with unfeigned sorrow we hear from Chupra the sad news that poor Mr. S. W. Ayers has succumbed to the bad attack of enteric fever he has been suffering under for the past three weeks. Last week he seemed better, but a few days back his condition was more serious, and on the first day of the Chupra June Meeting, of which, had he been in health, he would have been the very life and soul, his strength gave out, and as good a fellow as ever breathed was lost to us.

Throughout the length and breadth of Sarun no one could be more mourned and missed than poor Sammy. He had all the qualities that go to make a good planter, enthusiastic, intelligent and hard-working, with heaps of tact and honest as the day, he was one of the most promising of our young Managers, and under his able conduct Cheyton Pursah had grown into a very paying concern. But besides the loss that he is to our community as a planter and ourselves as a very dear friend, Behar will miss in him at a time when it can ill spare such, a keen and absolutely straight sportsman. A good rider and careful trainer, he always had something smart enough to carry his popular colors to victory, and for several years he has been one of the moving spirits at 'Sonepore, always ready to assist and back up the Stewards, and his unfailing good humour and willingness to sing and join in anything to promote sport and conviviality, made him a prime favorite at all social gatherings. He had this year been elected a Steward for the Sonepore Meeting. To know Sammy was enough to make one both like and respect him. Cut off in the very flower of his youth, and at the comparative commencement of a most promising career, his memory will long be green with us. Our sincerest sympathies are with his sister, who nursed him so tenderly throughout his illness."

The death of Mr. Archie Hills of Patkabari, king of Lower Bengal indigo planters and pigstickers, was also chronicled during this month, and though he had not often visited Sonepore, yet he was well known and liked in Behar.

So staunch a supporter of Sonepore as Jimmy well deserves that his biography should be added to these pages.

Mr. Jimmy Macleod, the well-known sportsman and Managing Proprietor of the Lallseryah Indigo concern in Chumparun, is a descendant of an old Highland family, the Macleods of Kaasay. Raasay, which is a beautiful Island

among the gems of the Scottish main, is now in possession of an English Banker, and supporting deer and rabbits, but it was once the principality of an independent chief, who waged war and made treaties and slew and captured as opportunity offered. He acknowledged the superiority of the King in Edinburgh only when down on his luck and hard pressed by his enemies, and paid little heed to the Church as shown by the entry in the inventory of the High Dean of the Isles—"a fine rough countrie and excellent for fishing, appertaining to Macgillichallallum of Raasay by the sword, and to the Bishop of the Isles by heritage."

Hostilities were sharp and sudden in those days. No declaration of war was required against the Mackenzies across the narrow sea. Were not those sons of devils holding hills and straths in former times pastured by the Macleods? Was not blood of the Siol Torquil still unwashed on their hands? Had not their chief been "put to the horn" by the Council? And were not their best men at the great Fair in the East country? Therefore man the black birlinns, muster the Clan. A wild and ravening crew, in whom the quality of mercy had been dried up by hunger and privation, they swept silently through the sound and at the time of the milking of cows, when the maids heard the croak of the ravens on the side of Beinn Dubh, cast anchor in a secluded inlet. At grey dawn they were in hiding, after a forced march, in the birchwood above Bada-chroe and its yellow patches of oats and barley sloping down to the sea. The cattle were being driven to the heights not yet bereft of their herbage; and little recked the shouting boys and girls of the direful faces peering from among the heather. The township was seen to be undefended and the invaders rushed forth to plunder and devastate amid the screams of children, the cries of women, and the execrations of men done to the death. Destruction and desolation were soon complete. Smoking ruins were all that remained of smiling

homesteads. But as the years went by the township rose again and young men and maidens made merry as they tended the herds or brought the harvest home. Memories of the foray had been softened by time and were relegated to the long winter evenings when the story was told by the blazing pine faggot. Another fate was reserved for Badachroe. The Laird learnt Sasanach ways and waste. The land was poor and the crofters ignorant. The Southerner was waiting with his gold. The big ship was anchored in the Bay. And first the sheep and then the deer browsed on the green mounds of Badachroe.

The Macleods, however, had reckoned without their host. A fisher-boy, gathering bait, had marked their course. The Mackenzies were under arms and had that morning made for the birlinns which put to sea to avoid capture. They were now on the track of the Macleods. As the latter were toiling with their booty through the pass by the side of a mountain tarn the former topped the sky line. At a level spot, where a small burn falls into the lake, the two bands met in rough line formation. After a discharge of arrows they closed at the double. There was no hanging back from actual combat nor shrinking from cold steel. Each man had to prove his worth with the broad sword. Among the heather they surged and swayed, and every now and then a wounded form fell or crept unnoticed, for the present, to the shelter of the burn. Woe to the Siol Torquil. The heather bloom was taking a darker tint from their blood. The remnant was being surrounded and overpowered. The hope of Raasay lay stark stiffening. They broke and fled. The pursuit was furious. At a turn in the pass where huge boulders narrow the way, the Macleods, seeing they would be overtaken one by one, and viewing a lagging comrade being butchered in the cleft below, turned like mountain cats and slew the advanced party of the Mackenzies. Thus respite and darkness coming on they

escaped, and at the break of day embarked. Wearily, wearily the galleys plough the placid sea. And the voice of lamentation and weeping was heard that night under the walls of Castle Brochel. This was the period of "spoils and slaughters."

In 1745 Macleod of Raasay, with 100 men, and Mackinnon, of Strath, with 120 were the only Chiefs in Skye who joined the Standard of the Stewarts. The ill-clothed, ill-armed Highland Army was the derision of the people of the South. But under the ragged tartans beat hearts filled with the truest sense of chivalry and the noblest feeling of devotion. The cause was desperate, the expedition was being led into the jaws of death, the gallant assembly in the picture gallery of Holyrood was doomed. The followers of Prince Charlie faced the might of England as a forlorn hope with halters round their necks. Nor in any case was there a prospect of aggrandisement from the Stewarts, who were an accursed race luring men to ruin. Their Panders and Prostitutes indeed rose to eminence or founded noble families; but cheap titles and worthless words were the rewards of the faithful. And the descendants of the martyrs who fell on the scaffold and in battle, or died in prison and in banishment, were suffered to languish in poverty and neglect. The spirit of the Highland gentleman was exemplified in Donald Macleod, of Bernera, who, being requested to attend his Chief at Dunvegan in the government service replied,—"I place at your disposal the twenty men of your tribe who are under my immediate command, and in any other quarrel would not fail to be at their head, but in the present I must go where a higher and more imperious duty calls me." This same brave Bernera, surnamed the Trojan on account of his fighting and begetting qualities, fought at Sheriffmuir, Falkirk and Culloden, and had twenty children, by his first wife, none by his second, and nine by his third—a girl of sixteen whom he married when he was seventy-five. His sons lived till the

Crimean War and a grand-daughter is alive now. Macleod, of Raasay, survived Culloden to be hunted like a wounded beast and to die from privation. His son, to whom the estate had been conveyed when the father went "out," had remained at home and now risked the family fortune anew to protect the fugitive Prince. In 1773 he entertained Dr. Johnson and Boswell. Here is Boswell's description of Malcolm Macleod, late Captain in the Highland Army:—"Now sixty-two years of age; hale and well proportioned—with a manly countenance, tanned by the weather, yet having a ruddiness in his cheeks, over a great part of which his beard extended. His eye was quick and lively, yet his look was not fierce, but he appeared at once firm and good humoured. He wore a pair of brogues; tartan hose which came up nearly to his knees and left them bare; a purple Camblet Kilt; a black waistcoat; a short green cloth coat bound with gold cord; a yellowish bushy wig; a large blue bonnet with a gold thread button. I never saw a figure that gave a more perfect representation of a Highland gentleman. I wished much to have a picture of him just as he was. I found him frank and polite, in the true sense of the word." And this is Dr. Johnson's account of their entertainment:—"Our reception exceeded our expectation. We found nothing but civility, elegance, and plenty. After the usual refreshments, and the usual conversation, the evening came upon us. The carpet was then rolled off the floor, the musician was called in, and the whole company was invited to dance; nor did ever fairies trip it with greater alacrity. The general air of festivity which predominated in this place, so far remote from all those regions which the mind has been used to contemplate as the mansions of pleasure, struck the imagination with a delightful surprise, analagous to that which is felt at an unexpected emersion from darkness into light. When it was time to sup, the dance ceased, and six-and-thirty persons sat down to two tables in the same room.

After supper the ladies sang Erse songs to which I listened as an English audience to an Italian Opera, delighted with the sound of words I did not understand. The family of Raasay consists of the laird, the lady, three sons and ten daughters. More gentleness of manners, or a more pleasing appearance of domestic society is not found in the most polished countries."

The elegance and plenty which surprised Dr. Johnson were more than the Highland Lairds and Tacksmen could afford. They fought and bled in every clime. The wail of the bagpipes was heard all the world over where blood ran red. The flowers of the glens were gathered to be strewed on every field. But all the fighting abroad, culminating in the great struggle at Waterloo, did not avail to preserve the "auld hous at hame." Skill and capital swept away gentry and cottars. Their tillage was thriftless, their stock-rearing antiquated, their resources limited. Capital and skill came from the South. The age of romance lapsed. That of forced sales and clearances began. The fairies forsook the green, the water demons the lakes. Kilted, masquerading, Englishmen now scatter their sandwich papers by the deserted village well and the South-country shepherd wanders, solitary, among his sheep. The Celt was deported to the Colonies or driven to the shore. For his good it is said.

Mr. Macleod's father was the last of the Macgilliechalums in Skye. He held land neither by the sword nor by heritage. But for all that his influence over his countrymen as a clergyman and a leader was more extensive, real and beneficent than that of any of his race. In later days his commanding figure, beautiful white hair, deep-blue eyes, and his countenance illumined by the light that never was on sea or shore were powerful to impress. And behind these was a keen, dialectic mind and a strong will. And with them the courtesy and grace of a high-spirited Highland gentlemen. No wonder the people worshipped him.

An eccentric but lovable person—a castaway as Cowper was—who had retired to the Isle of Skye from a grass country, used to say of the Macleods: “I like them all; but Jimmy is a fine creature; and he knows a good horse.” These are his characteristics to this day. Good and true are hackneyed terms and have been applied with little discrimination to frequenters of the turf and to busybodies at meets; but to the furthest stretch of their meaning they describe the career of Jimmy Macleod. “Pass him by, he is down; regard him not, he is ill-favoured” have never been suggestions to his generous mind. Reproof and railing sometimes in speech, kindness and helpfulness always in action, sum up his conduct. To Lall Serryah on the Lake the men and *women of Chumparun and Tirhoot have gathered as one large family. Oh the merry days! The merry days when we were young! Laughter holding both his sides was the presiding genius then. A native banker remarked, “The Sahib *log*, when they meet, are continually laughing.” No doubt he was of opinion they should have been pondering with grave visage on the *rupaiyapaisa*. And peradventure the purses of some planters would have been heavier if they had counted more and laughed less. But the best years of their life had to be spent in India perforce. Was the great central period of their existence, when such faculties as they possessed were at their highest capacity, to be passed only in a sluggish employment of the powers of the body without the incentive to exertion of the sympathy of dear friends, the humanising influence of the charms of music, the cheering and comforting effect of social intercourse, the invigorating and inspiriting rivalry of legitimate sport? Were planters to prepare for a miserable retirement at home by a debasing and brutish seclusion out here? Were they to assimilate themselves to that thing which neither reads, nor rides, nor plays polo; nor is seen in the ranks, or by the jungle cover, or on the banks

of the murmuring stream? Were they to impoverish their affections until their hearts were past rejoicing? God forbid! Under the leadership of Jimmy Macleod they have made for themselves homes, wherein the associations of the Fatherland are revived, and under his leadership they have formed a society, parochial perhaps and narrow in its interests, but second to none in brotherliness and, for the matter of that, sisterliness.

But hie to the grasses of the North; hark to the trumpeting of the elephants and the shouts of the coolies; note for an instant the hush of expectancy; mark the moving of the reeds; listen to the roar of the line—*Suar! Suar!* There he goes across the plain. Oh noble pig, king of the hunted ones, speed thee well. Steady, steady, or he will turn. Give him confidence, his place of safety is far away in yon green “nurkut.” He rests, disturb him not. Allow time for reflection and hustle him not to hasty resolves. He moves! Confound that eager fool on the prancing horse! Is he thinking of the fair one’s question “Who got first spear?” Hold back, Sir. Soft, he moves again! His choice is made with a lingering glance at the grass of peaceful slumber. The swell is topped and he is out of sight. Off! Jimmy has been an actor in such scenes as this until their memories must be thick as autumn leaves. He and Paddy Hudson have been brothers in the chase as in everything else. It was a pleasure to see them after a boar, how they suited their tactics to the nature of the country and were neither flustered nor selfish. When it came to the final rush, Jimmy was generally in front on a racer, with lively recollections of close finishes during the past cold season tearing at his bit. But when the course was short and the patches of cover close, and a turning movement had to be executed the horses were sent along as hard as they could go, regardless of what might be before them. Jimmy’s spear has more than once been of service to his friends in their need. On

one occasion after Paddy had delivered a spear his horse fell and lay on his legs. In an agony the wounded pig was limping up to be at him. Enter to them Jimmy on a skittish mare which, without more ado, to complicate matters, set to bucking. So there they were all three in difficulties. But a blow with the lead end of the spear between the ears brought the mare to her senses. And poor piggy was denied his desire and deprived of his life a few yards from Paddy's head. Another time "Shires" Canning and pig fell together over a blind ditch. They were so near that Shires kicked pig on the snout. A moment longer and the prospects of the family of Canning would have been poor indeed, for Jimmy's spear went through the boar almost between Shires' leg. Again, when poor Bob Hill was lying senseless, his horse having tumbled over the pig, Jimmy came to the rescue. And these instances might be multiplied. Another experience for Paddy was the old Peeprah Jemadar plugging his nose to bring his breath back. The biggest boar ever bagged in these districts (he measured 42 inches) was speared by Jimmy off a 13-2 pony. They mistook him for a young buffaloe at first, as he was seen in the distance lolloping across country. The pony must have been a rare one, for against the two Urquharts and George Llewhellin he secured four first spears that day. George Llewhellin in those years was the keenest rider of them all. Who would suspect him now of throwing over his *topee* to lighten the burden in a stern chase. Jimmy, even in the madness of youth, was ever careful of his horse and had only one cut, counting it better to miss a spear than to sacrifice the brave animal which trusted his guidance.

Falls and spills were of daily occurrence in breaking raw horses and in schooling. "Who is this Mr. John who is always smashing his bones?" questioned a reader of the Indian newspapers in London. Any snorting brute which would let a collar over his ears was shoved into the trap. "Come along,

Infant, he is all right," was the invitation for the evening drive. But now and then things did not turn out all right for the Infant. One day when the horse bolted the bit broke and Jimmy nipped off by the back seat. The Infant, unaware of the cause of the manœuvre, valiantly seized the reins to try his hand. But the harder he pulled the faster they went, until at last he was deposited with his pipe, lit, between his teeth on the slope of an embankment and the horse was cap-sized into a river.

Jimmy has been a steadfast lover of polo from its birth. His play, like that of most men in Behar, is not scientific; but for hard hitting and fast going and ardour of inclination he is not to be beaten. Indeed, feeble folk would rather he did not go so fast or shave so closely. Swish, and the vacuum he creates as he rushes past is enough to take the wind out of one. "Holloa," you hear from the corner of the ground, "there is Jimmy on that pulling brute, Lucifer: he will be the maiming of some of us before long." But though upsets and incidents of various kinds have been frequent, nobody has yet been badly hurt. Many is the tough game that has been played at Lall Serryah, and long and animated were the discussions after dinner, when the owner of Geraldine was in a mood to descant on his mare or to set the table into a roar.

The Behar Light Horse have pretty well been consumed by the fuel of red-tapeism, but they now show signs of playing the Phoenix. Under great discouragement and difficulties Colonel Hudson, Major Macleod and others have struggled to maintain the one link connecting the planters with the commonweal. Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal have hitherto taken a "from-in the-clouds" view of the Corps. We have scarcely heard one of them, save Sir Steuart Bayley, express a desire for the prosperity of the Corps or give an indication that he considered it worth the trouble of inspection. An expression of boredom that His Excellency should be pestered

with an escort has been all the notice vouchsafed. Nor have others been slow to take up the cue. Volunteering has been regarded by a section of the community as the outcome of frivolity, a conspiracy against honest work, a defrauding of employers, the antics of demoniacs rushing down the steep—in short it has been classed under sport. That the Behar planter's only political standing should not be cut away, and that, under happier auspices, the Regiment should be renewing its strength, is due to those who have stuck to it through thick and thin at the cost of inconvenience, irksomeness and temper. But to return to our subject.

In the opinion of the older professionals Mr. W. B. Hudson (Paddy) and Jimmy, who has always raced and ridden as Mr. John, were the first gentlemen riders in India. It was really a fine sight to see the former finishing. The horse was helped and compelled to make his effort until the last ounce was out of him at the post. In this Paddy was *facile princeps*. The points of Mr. John's riding were judgment, knowledge of pace, pluck, presence of mind and dogged determination. His perception of pace was a gift perfected by any amount of practice in riding races and gallops. At every period of a race he knew intuitively the pace in respect to timing and what his mount could accomplish. The consequence was that his management was rarely at fault. The horse was ridden exactly as best suited his qualities relatively to those of the other horses. And at the right moment he was called upon to use up the reserve power which had been carefully proportioned to the requirements of the occasion. Without pluck race-riding is a shuffling business. Mr. John's has often stood him in good stead and landed him a winner when a man with less nerve would have been hopelessly beaten. At Sonepore that big, powerful brute Boura Bill, coarse but not currish, who would jog every step of the way if you rode him from Lall Serryah to Calcutta, and whom

we all hated, cracked his rider's knee-cap against the distance post; but, on a 2lb. saddle, he was ridden out and finished on as if nothing had happened. In steeplechasing it was almost altogether pluck that made Mr. John such a brilliant performer. Once he had taught him fencing his method was to leave a horse to himself and we know what that requires. None of his horses ever refused in a chase or in a hurdle race. Delphos, Brown Duchess, Gameboy and others in their day were well known on this side of India, and always gave a good account of themselves in his hands. On the former he passed the post first amid great enthusiasm in the Grand Annual Chase in Calcutta. Delphos was a gentle, clever creature, beloved of his owner, and whom a baby in long clothes might have ridden. Under varying circumstances Mr. John invariably kept his head on the course and was ever ready to take advantage of the chances that offer in a race. He never gave up while there was a ray of hope, and in steeplechasing has been known to win by sheer determination when most men would have thrown up their hands half way round. He rode with the same pair of blunted spurs for fifteen years, preferring a few cuts of the whip as more effective than spurring when punishment was required. In one season he won 50 out of 75 mounts and in another 21 out of 26. In two years Paddy rode second to him 52 times. But we have heard Mr. John say he chose his mounts and had his own horses, while Paddy rode for anybody. For twenty years in the hot weather his weight was about 13 stone, and in the cold from under 10 to 11. The reduction was made by careful feeding without the help of physic; and he owes the preservation of nerve and health in this country after a thirty years' sojourn, with little leave, to temperate living and plenty of exercise. His recoveries from broken collar-bones from a split knee-cap and from contusions all over the body were extraordinarily quick on this account. Three horses were

killed under him steeplechasing and pig-sticking. With great regret sportsmen have heard a rumour of Mr. John's contemplated retirement from the Indian Turf, but we hope the black and yellow will be seen on our courses for many years to come.

It remains only to be said that under Jimmy Macleod's management Lall Serriyah—long ago sold for 200 maunds of oats—has developed into a valuable concern, as flourishing as the present times will permit, which is not saying much. His workings with the ryots have been on the give-and-take principle—"you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours." Jimmy goes home at the end of this cold weather for a longish space.

CHAPTER XLII.

YEAR 1896.

The Sonepore Meeting of 1896 will long be remembered as one of the most successful on record, and more particularly because of the splendid additions made to the grand stand and ball and supper rooms. At the end of last meeting Harry Abbott, following the example set him by Teddy Drummond in 1868, sent a round robbin to all old and present patrons of the meeting, pointing out that the accommodation in stand and building was not now sufficient to hold the yearly increasing numbers who flocked to the meeting. This appeal was most generously responded to. Right royally did the Maharajahs, who have so many years been staunch patrons of the meet, put their hands in their pockets.

Baboo Baijnath Pershad, the new lessee of the Ghâts, headed the list with the handsome donation of two thousand rupees. Baboo Rameshwar Narain Mahtha, the well-known Banker of Mozufferpore, contributed seven hundred and the Maharajahs of Durbangah and Hutwa each gave five hundred rupees. The Jaintpore Mahunt sent three hundred, Messrs.

Gillanders Arbuthnot and Co. two hundred and fifty and Messrs. Thomas and Moran two hundred each. Nearly every old friend of the meeting sent in his quota and close on eight thousand five hundred rupees was the handsome total reached.

In spite of fears of the coming famine a goodly gathering assembled under the trees on the 20th November; the ladies managing the different camps having arrived some days previously. In his favorite spot in the corner was encamped the oldest living patron of Sonepore, Mr. J. J. Macleod, for whom Mrs. Hall of Mozufferpore was kindly managing; and right well she presided. About a dozen guests were bidden, among whom were Mr. and Mrs. Hall, Mr. and Mrs. C. C. McLeod, Mrs. W. Thomas, Mr. R. D. West, Mr. Hobhouse, and others. Sir W. B. Hudson, looking far from himself, was there for a couple of days, but did not stay through the meet. Next on the right came the biggest gathering of the lot, the combined camp of Messrs. R. S. Lockhart, C. A. Mills and D. Macpherson, the clans mustered strong at this camp, John, George and Tom Macdonald were there, so was that stalwart man of Gorakhpore, the hospitable Laird of Bubenowley, Jock Mackinnon. Chupra was represented by the best looking civilian of his year, the modest Mr. Gauntlett. Bhagulpore sent another leading light of the service, Mr. B. Allen, whose endeavours to find a piece of horseflesh to match properly with his pretty pink and white complexion, caused infinite amusement. Mr. and Mrs. "Bones" Wilson, Mr. and Mrs. Artie Hume, Mr. and Mrs. Nicolay, Mr. and Mrs. Ryves, and a fair bevy of sweet maids consisting of Miss Conway-Gordon, Miss Goldsbury, Miss Green, Miss Lawrie and Miss Bryan, the latter a charming young Australian lady, who has come on a visit to see India. The crack G.R. of India, who rides under the name of Mr. Edward and his *fidus achates*, Mr. Kiernander, were also among the guests, as was that versatile bachelor Mr. G. G. G. Anderson and they

thoroughly enjoyed the meeting. Mr. H. E. Abbott and his daughter, Mrs. Barrow, were guests of Mr. Macpherson, and last but not least, was that great authority on form, Mr. Tim Lockhart. Mr. and Mrs. Bob Lockhart are household words at Sonapore, and their camp is always the popular evening *rendezvous*. Mrs. Hume's wondrous whistling and playing was listened to with the attention it so richly deserved and her talented husband's singing and acting nightly drew crowds to hear him. His song about the lady who had a pair of bloomers which she was too modest to wear, was distinctly smart. Mr. Knyvett's was the next camp, and then came Mr. Hare's, at which Mrs. Ramsay was presiding, the party numbered about sixteen. Then came the shamiana of Mr. Bourdillon, Commissioner of Patna, who had a fair crowd during the two days. His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor was present. Among the permanent guests were Mr. and Mrs. Ninian Elliot, just out from home, Mr. and Mrs. Lowis of Bettiah, Mrs. Bignell and Mr. A. Elliot. Then came a beautifully got up shamiana, the presiding deity of which was Mrs. Barclay and muchly did the thirty guests enjoy the ten days' hospitality shown them by the kindly Laird of Motipore. The Misses Evans from Calcutta were among the party. This camp was famous for the beauty of its young men, Messrs. Daubeny and Beatty being the prize winners. Last on the line were the tents of the Dinapore combined camp, ably run by that brilliant and most good-natured little lady Mrs. Tweddle. First at the end of the opposite side rose the big encampment of Mr. Charley Hay-Webb, best of sportsmen and pigstickers. In numbers the gathering was almost as large as Mr. Lockhart's, and round the piano every night assembled as jolly a lot as ever met at Sonapore. Taller than them all loomed the fine figure of the Rev. Hon'ble J. Marsham and his grand voice, still unimpaired by time, was a treat to all fortunate enough to hear him sing. Among the ladies

were Mrs. Hudson, Miss Rhodes, Miss Were, Miss Crane, Miss Ryles, Miss Weston, Miss Macnaghten, the two Misses Crawford and several others, while the sterner sex was represented by Mr. Harry Hudson, who supported the racing part of the entertainment heartily, and that greatest of war correspondents and luckiest of racing men, Mr. Lionel James, who cleared the board with his new purchase Pointsman. There too was Mr. Cruickshank, the popular Traffic Superintendent at Somastipore, now alas for the comfort of passengers by the Tirhoot line, shortly to leave for Uganda, where, if he does not find a premature grave in the interior of a savage but well meaning cannibal warrior, he will probably amass a fortune. Mr. Edgell, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Parsons, Mr. "Minor" and Mr. "Lump" Marsham, and a heap of juniors made up the rest. On Mr. Slack's old site was Mr. F. Place, Judge of Chupra, who had kindly bidden as guests all who had nowhere to lay their weary heads. With him were Mr. and Mrs. Simkins, Mr. Chapman, the new Chupra Joint Magistrate, Veterinary Captain Raymond, and half a dozen others. Then came a bachelor camp bossed by those festive youths, Mr. Percy Jones and Jack Rutherford, at which were the brothers Lee, Mr. Tom Macdonald, Mr. Warren and several other gay young sparks who hospitably entertained all passers-by every evening with vermouth, sloe, gin and other kindred spirits. Last on the list were two small encampments, one run by Mr. Jimmy King of Gorakhpore and the other by Mr. Onraet of Mudhobunhi. These with Framji's hotel completed the camps for 1896.

The day after the Lieutenant-Governor left saw clouds gathering all round, and the evening drive was put a stop to by a steady drizzle, which, while insufficient to do any lasting good to the afflicted districts, was a temporary pick-me-up to the standing crops, and though pianos were rained in on, and the shamianas were turned into receptacles for bathing

tubs, yet everyone took it good naturedly, feeling how welcome the downpour was to the anxious peasants and planters. Had the rain but fallen while the conference was in progress, the Hindoos would have connected it with His Honor's visit, they would have made a little tin god of and worshipped him for ever after. Old Beharites were indeed glad to see Mr. C. C. Stevens again, for he made himself universally liked when in charge of Patna, and he will be received with open arms, if it be true that he comes amongst us again as Manager of the Hutwa Raj; a sound statesman, good lawyer and penman, gifted with infinite tact and the most courteous manners, cautious, experienced, sympathetic and having a thorough knowledge of the Hindoo character, he will be the right man to guide the estate through the minority. Mr. Finucane, too, found many old friends to welcome him, and it was universally regretted that Mrs. and Miss Stevens and Mrs. Finucane had not come with the party. Mr. Gayer met many who had known his parents well, when Dr. Gayer was Civil Surgeon of Mozufferpore, and Sir Alec himself was remembered when he was a caustic youngster at Arrah. He won more than one sportsman's heart by the enthusiastic way he greeted Mr. Edwards' fine riding of Pointsman and we were only sorry we saw so little of one who can speak like a man, and is certain to keep a level head in a crisis such as has now to be faced in the province under his rule. His Honor has evidently heard of the rude way the Chupra dacoits treated his predecessor and, not wishing to be either robbed or abducted, brought his own special Bobby with him, Sir John Lambert's right hand, the invaluable Mr. Hogg, who saw Sir Alexander safely across the Ganges, and then returned to sample the turkey and champagne, on which he passed a favorable judgment. Our old friends Messrs. Bourne and Shepherd were absent this year, but Messrs. Johnston and Hoffmann sent up an obliging and bright little represen-

tative, who not only coaxed every camp to be operated on, but even induced those grave and reverend seniors, the Stewards, to face the camera ; he also got several flying shots at the horses when passing the winning post, so visitors should be able to obtain excellent *souvenirs* of the Meeting. Mr. Lionel James was taken sitting at his writing table surrounded by all the papers for which this talented youth is correspondent, and with Pointsman in the distance, chewing a copy of the day's *Englishman* and seeming to enjoy it as much as his readers do the Truthful One's graphic stories. All district residents, though sorry to hear Mr. Arthur Forbes is not returning, were glad that Mr. Bourdillon was to remain on as Commissioner of Patna, for no new man could have grasped the situation properly. Unless unusually copious rain falls within the next few weeks, Behar will have parlous times to face from March till the middle of July, and failing Mr. Forbes, Mr. Bourdillon is the man for the crisis ; the latter intends to give up his projected furlough and to sit tight till anxiety is over. The duties of looking after the ball and supper rooms were ably done by Mr. Alec Knyvett and right well did the veteran policeman manage things, saving a lot of money in wastage of champagne and sensibly getting the assistance of a professional in Sergeant-Major Sutton, of the Behar Light Horse, to do decorations ; right well did the ball-room look, though the floor was a bit heavy the first night and some few strangers were thoughtless enough to make unkind remarks, not realising that only two days before the dance had the workmen on the new repairs finished their labours. However, with a supper and ball-room doubled in size, a commodious new bar and band room, not to mention improvements to the grand stand and verandah, the comfortable additions to the ladies' cloak room and other petty improvements, there was not much to grumble over and by the second day the floor was lovely going.

Lobo's band played well throughout. As far as the Meeting went socially, it was most enjoyable, and the racing was marred by neither disputes nor disgraceful incidents. The one thing which militated against the Meeting being a record one, was the absence of a lady to take the lead. Invariably this position has been either taken by the wife of the Commissioner of Patna or the Collector of Chupra. This year in both cases things were all upside down. Mr. Bourdillon expecting to be transferred almost directly after the meeting, was only able at the last moment, on hearing he was to remain, to hurry up a temporary camp to accommodate the L.-G, his Staff and a few personal friends, and did not profess to rule the roost. The same thing was the case at Chupra, Mr. Earle only took over charge a few days before the meeting, and, like Mr. Bourdillon, had neither furniture nor facilities for running a camp. Mrs. Place, wife of the popular Judge, was at home, and so the Honorary Secretary had to let the camps go as they pleased. At the winding-up supper Mr. Place at the last moment was rushed in to asking those present to drink the Stewards' health, and under other circumstances the toast would have been well received, but the band began to play just as he started, and up got the dancers and chaos ruled so supreme, that but little he said could be heard. Save Mr. Abbott's the same may be said of most of the rest of the speeches and undoubtedly a good deal of soreness resulted, for it was but fair that men who like Messrs. Longmuir, Mills and Knyvett, to whose exertions those who enjoyed the meeting owed their fun, should have a few kind pats on the back in return. Only those who do the work can grasp what it means to run a show in a place like Sonapore, which has no town near it, and save Mr. Longmuir no resident near at hand, or conceive what the willing labourers have to go through to ensure everything flowing smoothly to the end.

The Gymkhana was well run by Mr. King of the Manchester and a very amusing afternoon was passed with Durban-gah's band to enliven the show, and a capital programme brought forth any amount of competition in spite of the fact that the rain had driven away many of those who would have had a try for the different events. Miss Green, who is a household word in Behar Gymkhanas and is the "Mr. Edward" among the riding ladies, won the trotting race in a walk on Mr. "Bones" Wilson's buggy mare, and then that hard-headed soldier Mr. Souter, who is, to the regiment's sorrow, leaving the Manchester, won an in-and-out-of-posts polo competition. For the ladies' jumping competition several above the average riders put in an appearance, and that plucky little cross country rider, Miss Evans, had no hesitation in coming out on a pony of Mr. James' to do battle with the big horses ridden by Mrs. Tweddle, Mrs. Ryves, Miss Burroughs and Mrs. Barrow. Eventually Mrs. Tweddle was adjudged winner, though Mrs. Barrow on Newmarket, came in for a not-uncalled-for amount of applause when she cleared a measured 25 feet with the obstacle in between. She won the pony jumping prize easily with Gobbit, trained by herself, and the Girton Stakes was won by Mr. F. Macnamara and Mrs. J. A. M. Wilson. The native portion of the fair was the smallest on record, the rajahs and zemindars mustered freely owing to the chance of a durbar being held by the Lieutenant-Governor. Sir W. B. Hudson was present, but took no part in the festivities and seemed by no means the staunch promoter of sport he was in his younger days. He looked ill and broken down, and only a few of his own clique knew he was in the Camp. Time was when Paddy, if he had lifted his little finger, could have done what he liked with the boys of Behar and he could have done just as much as in days of yore, at the meeting of 1896, had he chosen, for most of his oldest and warmest friends were at the Meeting,

but he kept himself in mufti and all were sorry to see the genial Irishman so changed. The polo ground, owing to the unusual want of rain, was a bit hard, but the interest in the now popular game was well sustained throughout, and tennis was well supported. Mrs. Lockhart, Mrs. Hay-Webb, Mrs. Barclay, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Ramsay, Mrs. Tweddle and the other ladies who managed the various camps had no light sinecure and right ably did they run their different shows. And now Sonepore from 1896 enters on an entirely new epoch. The old order of things has changed. In olden days the leading Civilians and planters ran the meeting as personal hosts, and the leading racing men of India brought their horses to compete. Now treble the number of people come, but they are no longer united by ties of connection, nor can they fitly be termed a family party lot. Comparative strangers to each other are both hosts and guests of the different camps and Stewards will have in future to accept the change. Probably few of those on the list of 1896 will be in evidence ten years hence, but they can at any rate lay the flattering unction to themselves, that they have left things in a state to satisfy the most *exigant* of successors.

The racing had, if entries were to be taken as any criterion, promised to be far above the average, but the chapter of accidents kept many outside horses away. Mr. Abbott's Tornado went wrong with liver early in the rains and had to be thrown out of work, hard lines, for the horse was just the sort for Behar Meetings. Then Monica hurt herself jumping, so Mr. Greenhill was not represented. Messrs. Milton and Co. sent nothing, and Hester having died, Mr. Martin did not care to send up Rambler alone, yet in spite of all these drawbacks the events were, in most cases, open, the contests close, and the racing good. Mr. Edward came up with Mr. Abbott's string, Alan, Victor and Kera, and Young had charge of Mr. Hardwick's Stowaway and Wellington; Ramshaw brought the

Nawab of Patna's pretty pony Rose, and these were all Calcutta sent. Mr. Jimmy King came from Gorakhpore with the Rajah of Tumkoi's Royal Rose and Ekka, as well as the Lall Saheb of Bansi's No Go, Mr. Wilson's Firefly and Mr. Rahugraf's Petroleum. Mr. John had Evelyn II., Real Jam, Cocab, Eve II. Skye, Malakand and Spider; Mr. Francis had Greenstone, Kapo, Greyling and Florida; Mr. Loftus, Hobart, Picallili and Fair Helen; Mr. Quintin, Idalia, Mike, Shrimp and Fanny Leah; Mr. Hay-Webb had Pointsman and Ghostie trained for Mr. Stanlake, Squib, Chester and Fulhatta; Mr. Yorke had only Moohahil. These, with a few others, constituted the competitors. The course was fair going considering the year, and Mr. Longmuir had done all that was possible in ploughing and manuring. Lotteries on the first night were poor, only four filling, Stowaway was made favorite for the Hutwa Cup and Squib for the Doomraon one; Wellington, a hot favorite in the two, filled in the *Planters' Gazette* Cup. The improvements in the grand stand were much appreciated and Sonepore now compares in that respect favorably with any of the up-country meetings. There is ample room for five or six hundred people, and Messrs. Mills and Longmuir deserve the hearty thanks of all connected with the meeting, the one for planning and the other for seeing the work so well executed. At eight o'clock the Durbangah band struck up a lively tune as the three competitors for the Hutwa Cup, Alan, Stowaway and Pointsman, paraded. Alan had the services of Mr. Edward, Stowaway had Young in the saddle, Wiles steered Pointsman. Mr. C. Miller and his brother Ted kindly started throughout the meeting and uncommonly well they did it. Charley Miller has thrown his heart and soul into polo, and ably piloted his team to victory at the last Behar Polo Tournament. The Messrs. Miller proved themselves most useful aids to the Stewards, ungrudgingly depriving themselves of the sight of any single race solely to

oblige, and they deserved the heartiest thanks of all owners, for there was not one bad start, and every rider allowed that he had the fullest confidence in the gentlemen who so kindly wielded the flags.

In the *Planters' Gazette* Cup, in spite of a difficult field of eight unruly ponies, they were got off at the third attempt, Piccalilli rushing to the front, the rest in a cluster, the favorite held well in the centre; at the distance post Young brought Wellington to the front and he cantered in an easy winner by three lengths; Idalia second. In the Hutwa Cup Wiles, presumably under orders, took Pointsman to the front at a rare pace, but the horse was not fit enough to last out, and he was passed at the corner by Stowaway, but Mr. Edward was waiting quietly behind, and at the quarter mile he drew up to the leader, and from this cantered home an easy winner. Evelyn II made running in the Bettiah Cup, but Squib and Victor soon joined her, Mr. Edward again riding a fine race, and winning on the post all out by a head. Favoritism was equally divided for Jessop's Cup between Greyling, Cocab, Moohahil and Petroleum, but the game little grey of Mr. Francis' simply squandered his field and romped home ten lengths in front of Moohahil, who was steered by Mr. Edward. Ghostie had an almost equally easy win for Messrs. Moran & Co's Cup, though all the others were fancied as good goods. In fact the day's racing was far from bad, and though the fields in the horse races were poor, yet Mr. Edward's finish in the Bettiah Cup was a fine exhibition of horsemanship. Alan struck into Stowaway's heels coming round the corner, and had to be thrown out for the entire meeting. Another bit of hard luck on his owner.

Prospects for the second day's racing were much marred by the unusually big field for the Durbangah Cup resolving itself into a walk over for Stowaway, as Pointsman's owner elected to start his horse for the Doomraon Cup, three-quarters of

a mile, even with eleven stone to carry, sooner than face Stow-away over a mile and getting seven pounds from him. Messrs. Framji's Cup was won by Petroleum, Mr. Edward up; Picalilli second. The Doomraon Cup proved the best race of the day. Sir Alexander Mackenzie came just in time to see it run for, and the representative of the generous donor, Sir Jaypergas Lall stood by His Honor on the grand stand while the race came off. If ever a race was won by sheer horsemanship, the Doomraon Cup was; at the distance the weight told and Pointsman's tail started giving signals of distress, but Mr. Edward sat down and nursing his beaten horse with the most consummate judgment, just squeezed him home by half a length amidst the most enthusiastic cheering ever heard at Sonepore. In the grand stand, as Pointsman, Greenstone and Squib passed locked together—and it was apparent that riding alone helped Pointsman to the position he occupied—the stentorian tones of Sir Alec's voice rang out in sheer admiration at the fine display "Well ridden, well ridden, well ridden, Sir." It was a manly recognition of merit, and as Mr. Edward rode in, the plaudits in the enclosure were renewed again and again. In addition to the pleasure afforded horsemen, such as Behar planters are, in seeing the keen struggle between the riders of Pointsman and Greenstone, they were the more gratified at seeing a young assistant's horse not only holding his own against all comers, but virtually sweeping the board. Mr. James is a consistent supporter of racing, does not confine himself to ponies, and richly deserved his success; he has, so far, been uniformly lucky in his racing career, his nags have been well and cheaply bought, and his success should be a stimulus to others to go and do likewise. Greenstone ran a good and game horse, and Young rode him well, but he was pitted against a master of coolness and judgment, and no blame to him that he was beaten. Mr. Francis, or to give

him his proper name, Mr. Vincent, was recompensed by seeing Greyling with Young up, score another easy win for Syed Munjhli Nawab's Cup, and then came a selling race, Ekha and Kera, the only starters, Mr. Edward on the latter had simply to trot to win. Mr. Abbott sold the horse afterwards to Mr. Macleod for one of his assistants, and he will probably figure at Mozufferpore. Lotteries were good on Monday night, and fields fair for Tuesday's events. Piccalilli, who was made a hot favorite in spite of his popular young owner's tearful remonstrances that the handicapper had been most cruel, won Messrs. Bourne and Sheperd's Album easily, and then came the race of the meeting, the Civilians' Cup. Squib had changed hands, having passed into the possession of that best of good fellows and sportsmen, Mr. Gye, who bought him chiefly for the Mozufferpore chases, in which with his turn of foot Squib should figure prominently. Mr. Webb parted with him only because he is going home in the spring. Stowaway at 10 stone and Pointsman 9st. 8lbs. divided favoritism, but the crowds of non-racing men piled it on the Bicanpore brown as soon as Mr. Edward appeared in Mr. James' colors. Their confidence was not misapplied, for once more this honest horse got home, this time with fair ease. At last that careful amateur Mr. Quintin had a win, and on Shrimp he appropriated Mr. Mills' Cup; Malakand, a lovely Arab pony of Mr. Ninian Elliot's, not yet fit, getting second. But now came the biggest upset of the week, Kellner's Cup, which brought the biggest field of the meeting to the post, ten going out, the favorites were nowhere, and the dead outsiders Royal Rose and No Go, trained by Mr. Jimmy King for the Tumkahi Rajah and Lall Saheb of Bansi, ran first and second; they had only fetched ten rupees each in the two lotteries held in the race. All were glad to see the Rajah win, for he is a good sportsman and had given a Cup to the races; and still more to see Mr. King's careful training rewarded. Royal

Rose was sold to the Rajah by Gascard and was one of the many fine ponies that importer brought up last year. Mr. Edward added another leaf to his already full laurel wreath by steering Greenstone home for Messrs. Thomas' Cup. It is thirty years ago since Mr. Frank Vincent, the father of Greenstone's owner, was the able director of racing at Sonapore, and it was one of the pleasantest incidents of the meeting to old frequenters to see his son lucky on the same course which had witnessed so many triumphs of his sporting father. The Tumkahi Purse, presented by the Rajah, was fittingly won by another Behar Prince, Syed Munjhli Nawab of Patna, a Steward of the meeting, and who had himself presented one of the handsomest prizes of the meeting. This wound up the racing. Too many thanks could not be given to Mr. C. C. McLeod for the care he gave the handicaps, which the Stewards after passing found but little to cavil at; the finishes were a criterion of their excellence. Mr. Tim Lockhart was a careful Clerk of Scales and the general arrangements were all that could be desired. The cards of the days' racing and the ball programmes supplied by Messrs. Thacker, Sprink & Co., were most creditable to that enterprising firm.

And with this I must end Sonapore Reminiscences, perhaps years hence some other inklinger may take up his pen and tell how racing improved or retrograded on the favorite old course and some other sportsman may hold the reins which I have done for so many years.



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